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THE  
PRO AND CON  
OF  
UNIVERSALISM,

BOTH AS TO ITS

DOCTRINES AND MORAL BEARINGS;

IN A SERIES OF ORIGINAL ARTICLES.

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BY GEORGE ROGERS.

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STEREOTYPE EDITION.

CINCINNATI:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR, BY R. P. BROOKS,  
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## NOTE TO THE READER.

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MORE than a year elapsed from the time this work was commenced until it was completed; during which the author performed some seven or eight thousand miles of travel, by steamboat, and stages, and on horseback, besides delivering some two or three hundred discourses. It was amidst these employments—in addition to those arising from the charge of a family—that these pages were composed, and that (the reader is assured) without the slightest aid from any kindred publication. With the candid, these facts will form a reasonable apology for some of its defects, of style, or argument, or consistency, from which it will by no means be pretended that it is free.

In saying that he derived no aid from kindred publications, the author would not be understood as setting up a claim to entire originality for his production; on the contrary, he is full well aware, that on so beaten a theme it is impossible to write so lengthily, without occasionally repeating what others have previously advanced. His purpose, however, was to avoid this as far as practicable, and to add something to the common stock of Universalist literature; something, too, which by its mildness and candor should be adapted to commend our doctrines to the popular notice and approval. How far he has succeeded in this, is left to the reader's decision.

CINCINNATI, Nov. 8th, 1838.

ALICE SHERWOOD,  
OR  
THE PENNSYLVANIA VALLEY :  
A TALE,

*Showing the influence of certain religious doctrines on individual and social life.*

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CHAPTER I.

CONCEIVE, reader, if you please, a deep and quiet valley, of about five miles in length from the points whence it takes its particular designation, and a mile and a half in medial breadth ; the hills, by which on both sides it is hemmed in, may be some two or three hundred feet in altitude, and are very precipitous, varying indeed but a little from perpendicularity ; from their bases to their summits they are covered with a thick natural growth of hemlock-fir-trees, intermingled with stunted hazels and sumachs, save that here and there may be seen a soft spot which has been cleared by the axe of the settler : and how picturesque is the effect of those spots ! they occur mostly in the occasional curvatures and indentations by which Nature, with her usual taste, has varied the monotony of these mountainous ridges ; or in the defiles which the rivulets from the interior have scooped out in their journeyings towards the ocean.

I will suppose you standing on one of these acclivities, especially the one on the eastern side, for there the advantage of survey is greatest, and the eye from thence can take in an extent of prospect only bounded by its reach of vision. What a scene of loveliness you now have before you ! it is but little rivalled, if at all, by the far-famed and classic Wyoming. A wide reach of fertile bottom land under excellent cultivation stretches for more than a mile in your front, and for miles on either hand ; it varies in its shades of green according to the diversified products with which it is teeming ; the rich and extensive pasture grounds are mottled with cattle, and sheep, and lambs, which are feeding very contentedly, apparently conscious that their "lines are fallen to them in pleasant places." The trees which have been spared by the inhabitants for

purposes of shade and ornament, throw out their branches with a luxuriance which betokens a generous soil, and certainly contribute their full quota toward the aggregate beauty of the picture.

A road, you perceive, runs lengthwise through the vale, along which many neat habitations are sprinkled; and about midway there arises the steeple of a modest and tasteful house of worship; on its vane at this moment the sun's setting beams are reposing: a more fitting emblem of the mild and cheering character of the doctrines dispensed within that temple, could not well be imagined—doctrines adapted to shed on the spirit's parting hour the light of an immovable trust in heaven.

But the brightest feature in this lovely landscape is yet unmarked: cast your eye, reader, toward the foot of yonder western barrier; there rolls a river, so exquisitely pure and placid, that it resembles a burnished mirror; it is, however, partially hidden from our view by the elms and sycamores which fringe its margin, and immediately opposite to us its channel is divided by an island. How soft and verdant! The muses, and the graces, yea, and goddesses too, might be well content with grottoes on that green and quiet spot. I fancy that, of a calm evening, we might hear at this distance—*perhaps* we might—the murmuring of the stream where it is broken by the upper point of the island; and then, in addition to this exhibition of Nature's taste in penciling, we should have a pretty specimen of her skill in music.

That river, reader, is the Susquehannah, and I doubt me much if in all this wide world the lord of day looks down upon a stream which reflects back his glory more clearly than does this beautiful daughter of the Otsego lake. I have threaded its shores in all their windings, from where it issues from the aforesaid lake among the hills, to where it blends its translucent waters with the briny billows of the Chesapeake bay; and nowhere, methinks, within equal limits, has beauty, in its softer forms, consecrated to itself a greater number of dwelling places: its bordering hills present every conceivable variety of aspect; now they incline in grassy or arable slopes; anon they tower in perpendicular or beetling ledges; here they sweep away in graceful curves a mile or more from its verge, leaving space for broad tracts of level and rich alluvion; and there they run for miles along the river's brink, and mirror their huge forms upon its waters, as though Nature were as proud

as other beauties are, of contemplating the reflection of her charms. I have told you, reader, this river's name, but the valley itself you must be content with knowing under the fictitious cognomen of UNIVERSALIA. Now let me point your attention to that school house : there are two in the valley, but this to which I allude is toward its southern extremity ; it is a wooden structure, surrounded, you perceive, by a grassy plat, and shaded, almost embowered, with beautiful forest trees : it wants but to be white-washed to render it a perfect picture of the rural kind. I must give the settlers a hint of this when I next visit UNIVERSALIA ; for pity it were that a scene so nearly perfect, should lack those little attentions which would constitute it completely so. I may add also, by the way, that in my opinion, school premises every where should be rendered as agreeable as possible ; for there the members of human society gather most of their earliest associations, and these exert no small influence upon their subsequent lives. Virtue and happiness not only accompany, but they also *promote* each other. By as much, then, as it is an object worthy of all attention to form a happy and virtuous society, by so much is it important to commence at the fountain head, and to blend with the business of juvenile instruction as much of purity and pleasantness as possible. With this digression I will close my first chapter.

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## CHAPTER II.

She who teaches the school at present, in the building above described, is a young lady from Connecticut : her stature is about the middling height, her form slender, the color of her hair and eyes a light hazel ; the latter are large and prominent, and, by their expression, say much for the sweetness and innocence of the indwelling soul. I could tell you the true name of this young lady if I chose, but I do not choose ; and, therefore, since she must bear some name in our story, we will call her ALICE SHERWOOD. She is not, as I have said, a native of this valley, but is an exotic, of recent transplantation from the "land of steady habits ;" and sooth to say, there blooms not in all the vale a lovelier flower than Alice, which is saying much for her, for many a lovely flower blooms there.

In religion, Alice is a Calvinist of the modern stamp : of course her faith is but an educational one, in which her understanding has

extremely little concern ; for what concern can the understanding of a young lady of eighteen have with the mysteries of the *trinity*, which represents Jehovah as being both the father and the son of himself!—*native depravity*—the demands of the divine law against us to an *infinite amount*, on the ground of a debt alleged to have been contracted by our progenitors, some thousands of years before we were born!—the *satisfaction of this claim by the murder of an innocent victim*—the *transfer of our guilt, both original and actual, upon the head of the unoffending Son of God*—and the *imputation of his righteousness to creatures who have no righteousness of their own?*

These are subtleties for the brain of the metaphysical divine, but are not at all suited to the unsophisticated mind, and guileless heart, of a young lady of eighteen.

It will be understood, then, that in describing our heroine as a Calvinist of the modern school, I mean, simply, that she adheres to that party from educational and family prepossessions. The dogmas of this, as distinguished from those of the old school, are, that God has provided in the gospel ample means to save those whom from all eternity he *unchangeably determined to damn!*—that Christ shed his blood for the same class, with the certainty before him, that they *could never be availed by it!*—that all may be saved *if they will*, notwithstanding that *none can will* to be saved but such as God has foreordained to that end, and they *can do no otherwise* than will it!—and that the chief aggravation of the miseries of the damned, will arise from their having rejected a gospel that *was never meant for them*, and which it was *utterly out of their power to accept!* with other matters equally sane and salutary.

Alice, nevertheless, is a good and pious girl—for there *are* good and pious persons of every religious persuasion—either because their natural dispositions are so good as to defy the corrupting influence of a bad faith, or because they do not entertain that faith with so firm a persuasion of mind as to allow it its full weight of evil influence. However, so stands the fact, be the philosophy of it what it may ; and it is certainly better of the two to be *theoretically* wrong, and *practically* right, than the contrary : for if the *heart* be wrong, the *head* will easily be induced to stray with it ; whereas, if the former be right, the latter may easily be redeemed from its errors. And yet it must be confessed that many a young and innocent heart receives its earliest taint from the princi-



ples which a false education imposes upon the understanding. Alice had been taken seriously to task by her sincere but mistaken old father, shortly previous to her leaving home, because she had commended the goodness of a certain lady of her acquaintance. "You must always bear it in mind, my dear," said old Mr. Sherwood, "that persons who are out of the church are in a state of *nature*—which is a state of unmixed depravity—however good, therefore, they may seem to be, they are in fact vile and abominable: they cannot think a good thought, nor do a good act—and their deeds which seem to be good are but 'deceitful workings,' and are more detestable in the divine sight, as being the offspring of hypocrisy, than are even those that *we* would pronounce evil. Beware, then, of looking to the *unregenerate* for any thing truly virtuous; you will be deceived with specious appearances, but will never find what you seek; 'for who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one;'—the virtues of the unconverted will be but as millstones around their necks to sink them the deeper under the waves of divine wrath." "But my dear father," enquired Alice, "is it not possible for a person to be pure and upright, and as such, acceptable to our Creator, even though without religion in our sense of the term?" "*In our sense of the term!*" somewhat impatiently retorted Mr. Sherwood; "I tell you, Alice, that there is no other *true* sense of the term, but that which you are pleased to characterize as *ours*; and if a person be without religion in *this* sense, then is he without it in *any* sense—his heart is rank in rebellion against Jehovah, and he would, were it possible, tear him from his throne. Talk not to me, then, of the goodness of unregenerated man; 'there is no soundness in him,' but 'from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, he is nothing but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores.'"

Such are the dark principles of theology in which our heroine was educated—principles which, had they taken root in her mind, would have driven thence all its native benevolence, and with their sombre shadows must have darkened her vision to all that is fair and beautiful in life: happily for her they found not a congenial soil in her nature; and, consequently, although they perplexed her understanding, they failed of corrupting, in any great degree, that pure fountain whence principally the streams which sadden or gladden existence have their source—the heart.

## CHAPTER III.

One of the most beautiful features of christianity—not, alas ! as it commonly exists in the practice of its professed disciples, but as taught by its author—is the spirit of kindness and forbearance it enjoins toward those who differ from us in faith and principles. “If ye salute your brethren only,” saith Christ, “what do ye more than others ? for even the publicans do the same.” And the moral of that affecting story of the man who fell among thieves, manifestly is, that *all* are to be considered as our neighbors who stand in need of our services, that good Samaritan-like we must not stop to enquire whether the claimants upon our sympathies be Jew or Gentile, but must do good to all, without distinction of nation or sect.

Alice Sherwood had not been accustomed to exhibitions of this spirit, although her whole life had been spent in the bosom of religious society ; for even the *christian* charities of the present age are but too much confined within party limits, and are exceedingly selfish and calculating. She had been wont to hear denounced as heretics, all who withheld assent to the dogmas of her faith, however distinguished they might be for uprightness and amiability of character. One of her first impressions, therefore, relative to the people amongst whom she is now sojourning, was, that as they were perfectly tolerant toward persons of all religious opinions, it was not possible that they possessed any religious opinions of their own. But see—she is at this moment engaged in writing to her parents—we can take the liberty of peeping over her shoulders, and of thus satisfying to the full our curiosity as to all these matters. With motives so laudable, it will be no trespass against politeness, I trust.

\* \* \* \* “Having described to you the situation of my school, I proceed, my dear parents, to acquaint you with other circumstances connected with my condition here. And first, I am almost wholly deprived of access to the outward means of grace. There is no church of our persuasion short of a distance of four miles from my residence, and even it is on the other shore of the river, in a delightful village called *THE POINT*. The expense of ferriage thither and back is incurred each time I attend it, and there is about a mile of the way called *THE NARROWS*, which is

often unsafe : it lies between abrupt ledges of rock and the water's edge, and the road is scarcely of sufficient width to admit the passage of a vehicle. I seldom think of surmounting these difficulties to attend worship there. As to the people here, they are nearly all of one religion, and that a new kind to me. In *moral* and *social* respects, however, they are all that I could wish them to be. I have found very intimate companions in two young ladies—they are both very thorough subjects of this new faith, and very zealous in its propagation. I must do them the justice to say, that in my opinion, no good cause could fail of gaining by their advocacy. The one is about my own height and age, and is a very *impersonation* of mildness and sweetness of disposition. An angel sent from heaven to soothe a wounded spirit, might borrow her voice and accents with advantage. The other is somewhat her superior in years, and likewise in those accomplishments which are the result of cultivation. She seems also to surpass her companion in religious zeal, from the fact that her natural temperament is more ardent : her peculiar views in theology are with her a favorite topic of conversation, and her language is often marked with much felicity of expression.

“ I supposed, till I had been several weeks with this people, that they had discarded religion in every form ; for I had witnessed amongst them no acts of devotion, nor did their external appearance or bearing indicate piety, according to my ideas of it.

“ On one fine evening, after school, I was enjoying a ramble on the mountain which forms the eastern boundary of this beautiful vale—I had reached a point in the obscure path I was pursuing where it emerges from a thicket of sumachs, when I was startled at finding myself very close to an aged man, who was seated on the ground, apparently so occupied with his own thoughts as to be unconscious of my approach : I soon, however, regained self-possession, when I had scanned his venerable appearance, and catching his eye at length, had read its intellectual and benign expression ; besides, I had seen him before, and knew him to be a highly respectable old gentleman, and looked up to by the settlers as a kind of patriarchal head. He greeted me with much courtesy, and motioned me to take a seat on a moss-covered fragment of rock opposite to him, which, as I was short of breath from toiling up the rugged acclivity, I was sufficiently inclined to do.

“‘I have been indulging, for perhaps the last time on earth,’ said the old Squire, (for by such familiar cognomen is he known in these parts,) ‘in an evening survey of the wonderfully varied works of our Creator: the scriptures are certainly correct in affirming, ‘he hath made every thing beautiful in his time,’ nor beautiful only, for they speak forth to the distrusting heart of man the most intelligible assurances of his Maker’s infinite loving-kindness. With all their grandeur and glory, they nevertheless but faintly shadow forth his wisdom and benevolence. The poet’s deduction is just:

‘Thus wondrous fair, thyself how wondrous then?  
 Unspeakable, who dwellest in highest heaven.  
 To us invisible, or dimly seen  
 In these thy lower works.’

“‘When I was a child,’ says Paul, ‘I thought as a child.’ I remember that when a lad I used to think the whole world was comprised between these parallel ridges. How great was my surprise when I first ascended to where we now are sitting, and beheld range behind range in apparently interminable continuity. I used to set bounds to the goodness of God from the same principle. My religious education had prescribed for me but a narrow range of intellectual vision. I supposed that the sun of his mercy arose and set within that contracted horizon—but, ‘when I became a man I put away childish things,’ and for many years have calmly rested in the persuasion, that the divine benevolence is as immeasurable as space, and as all-embracing; which blessed trust has been the light of my spirit in my darker hours, and continues to be so still as the day-star of my life is setting.’

“I expressed my surprise at his utterance of these pious sentiments, ‘in as much,’ said I, ‘as I have concluded with confidence that there is no religion amongst you—you certainly never pray, and——’ ‘Pardon me,’ interrupted he, ‘how came you by the *certain* knowledge that we never pray?’ ‘I infer it,’ was my answer, ‘from the fact that I never either saw or heard you so engaged.’ ‘Not the most logical inference in the world, my fair friend,’ he rejoined, ‘since many things are constantly transpiring around you which you neither see nor hear. Moreover, the religion of Christ courts not the eye nor the ear of man—it is modest, and is content with being visible *in its effects*. To see or hear us pray, therefore, would be to detect us in a flagrant violation of the

gospel command : ' When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut the door, then pray to thy Father which is in secret,' etc. Have you, young lady, been so accustomed to an infraction of this express precept, that its very observance on our part is deemed evidence that we are irreligious ?

" My dear parents, what could I reply to this ? I felt it, indeed, to be a thrust that there was no possibility of parrying. So, abandoning this ground, I attempted to sustain my impeachment upon another. ' How is it, sir,' I inquired, ' that I observe among you none of those *anxieties* that are usual to pious persons ? Your people exhibit no *solemn feelings* with regard to death and eternity—they have no *concern* about the preparation requisite to stand in the awful presence of their Maker. Does not this evince their destitution of piety ?

" I wish you could have witnessed the surprise which these inquiries elicited. He surveyed me in silence for a time, but with a most placid expression of countenance. ' Can it then be possible !' he at length exclaimed, ' that a freedom from *distrusts* in the goodness of heaven exposes to the charge of being without religion ?—for rest assured, young lady, that the *anxieties* and *awful feelings*, of which you speak, can be no otherwise rationally interpreted, than as evincing a want of confidence in God. Let me put the case to your own private experience. You are at present far from the home of your parents—suppose that the time for your return were at hand, would your mind be affected with *anxieties*, lest, for want of certain preparations, they might spurn you from their presence ? or would you indulge in anticipations of delight, that the moment was near that would find you enfolded in their arms, and your heart cheered with their benedictions ?' ' I should, certainly,' said I, ' be affected in the latter way, but——' ' Pardon me once more,' he replied, ' that *but* comprises the whole difficulty. Your trust in your Father in heaven is not equal to that in your parents on earth. That is the sum of the matter—your religious education is to blame for this ; you have been accustomed to a class of religionists whose confidence in heaven's love is as weak as your own. You now, however, have found a different people ; *we* trust that the Being who made us, is able, and as willing as able, to take care of us ; he clothes the lily—he feeds the sparrow—and why should we not be equally

the subjects of his providence? But see, my young friend, it is time we were on our way down the mountain, for one half of the sun's disk is already below the western horizon.'

"The above conversation, my dear parents, is but an outline of that which took place betwixt the old Squire and myself; he is very prolix in discourse, but his ideas are strikingly just, and his arguments forcible. Whether it be from the influence of religion, or philosophy, or both combined, I know not, but so it is that he maintains with admirable composure his position on that awful line, where the territory of time unites with that of eternity.

"I will close this letter with some remarks as to our co-religionists in this region. Either they are much below the same class in Connecticut, in sincerity, moderation, and courtesy, or the veil of partiality, through which I may have been accustomed to see them, has been removed; for certain it is, that in respect to these indispensable christian graces, they compare very disadvantageously with the people of this valley, which is a pity, too, for the latter are despised by them, and denounced as heretics. But why *heresy* should be invested with such fascinations of candor, christian charity, and purity of life, while what is termed *truth*, is often found associated with moroseness and intolerance, is, dear parents, a sad puzzle to  
Your affectionate daughter, ALICE."

I must inform you, reader, that the latter member of the above alternative expresses the truth. Alice's co-religionists on THE POINT are, I suspect, as good as the same class in Connecticut, or any where else; but the mind of our heroine had undergone a gradual change—her partialities were in some degree removed, and her perceptions were in consequence less clouded. She now saw many things in the conduct of those denominated *saints*, which shocked her ideas of propriety, and led her to inquire within herself, "Is it possible that Connecticut christians would act thus?" Simple hearted girl! she will find before she dies that evil principles of religion, in all climes alike, exert an evil moral influence

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#### CHAPTER IV.

Well, a month has elapsed since the epistle was written which occupies so much of the foregoing chapter: as the humble

chronicler of events in which our heroine is concerned, I must record what has transpired within the time; especially as the material required for the completion of our history is to be drawn principally from the incidents of that month.

Be it known, then, that in the early part of it, the good folk on THE POINT held a religious meeting of twelve days' continuance: Alice attended it throughout, suspending her school for the purpose, a usual thing on such occasions—not with regard to schools merely, but also to most of the ordinary operations of life—and whilst the class of religionists who have recourse to this measure (evidently for sectarian ends,) affect to be horror-stricken at the idea of being employed in secular pursuits on the sabbath, they at the same time regard the command, “six days shalt thou labor,” with about as much respect as though it had emanated from the Spartan law-giver. So much for puritanic consistency.

Alice had fresh occasions, during this meeting, for observing how much a comparison between the people of her own church, and those of Universalia, resulted in favor of the latter. Old Mrs. Matthews, a resident on THE POINT, with whom she tarried during the twelve days, was of the latter class; she rendered our heroine every friendly attention, and afforded her every facility in her power for attending upon all the services. She even accompanied her, when she could do so consistently with her domestic duties, although, in carrying her civility so far, she subjected herself to the necessity of frequently hearing the doctrines she cherished, together with the believers in them, made the subjects of violent invective and misrepresentation. “Never mind it, my dear Mrs. Matthews,” Alice would say on their way from church, “I cannot think our preachers in Connecticut would thus decry their christian neighbors without the slightest reason or provocation.” “Nor would they here,” the old lady would calmly reply, “if they deemed that their own faith, or morals, would endure a candid comparison with those of the people they denounce.”

Mrs. Matthews had a hired girl, who was a member of the church on THE POINT, and quite a zealot too in that way: had she possessed as much brain as piety it would have been well enough with her; but, as it was, her zeal was constantly running away with the little sense she had; although a very poor girl, and her mother a widow in extremely indigent circumstances, she could

not forego, on the present occasion, the attending upon every service of the meeting; she entered into a compact with the old lady, by which her wages were to be suspended for the twelve days, during which she was to have the privilege of attending at three preachings and two prayer meetings each day, and to receive her board for such little service about house as she could render in the intervals. "If you were in unison with me in religious opinions, Bridget," said old Mrs. Matthews, very mildly, "I should feel it my duty to control you in this matter, for your own and poor mother's interests; as it is, however, it would not fail, were I to interfere, to be ascribed to unworthy motives."

That the *heart* of Bridget Bounce (for so was she named) was profited by these religious exercises, is possible; whether her *understanding* was improved, or her scanty stock of information enlarged, is a matter of much doubt. At the conclusion of the last day's services, Bridget returned home excessively elated in mind. "Oh, Mrs. Matthews!" she exclaimed, "I do wish you had heard Mr. F——, to-day! If he ain't a dear man there never was one!" "Why, what did he preach about?" inquired the old lady. "Oh, I don't know exactly," answered Bridget, "but it was something about getting religion, I believe." "Can you tell me where he found his text?" inquired the old lady again. "La, suz!" exclaimed the somewhat puzzled Miss Bounce, "I don't mind now whether it was in the fore eend of the bible, or the hind eend, but I expect it was somewhere in the book of Paul." "You have the advantage of better eyes than mine, Bridget," Mrs. Matthews drily retorted, "if you can find *the book of Paul* in the bible, either in the beginning, ending, or middle.

We must not be in haste to censure or to laugh at poor Bridget Bounce; in returning from the preaching without any ideas at all she did quite as well as many others of the congregation, whose pretensions were much higher, and better than though she had carefully hoarded, without understanding, all the humdrum spiritualities that were sawed out on the occasion; for the sermons usually delivered at such times, be it known, are among the silliest of all the silly offspring of the human brain, (provided, always, that *brain* be necessary to their production,) and are as innocent of any thing resembling sense, as the preaching of the Savior was wont to be of any thing resembling them. I will sustain the truth of



these remarks, by presenting outlines of some that were deemed the best which were delivered during this meeting.

Mr. M—— took for his text, “*Take ye away the stone.*” It is found in the account of the raising of Lazarus. The preacher alluded but little to the history; but proceeded to assume as the spiritual teaching of the text, (1) That the unconverted are morally dead and buried, and as incapable of any thing good as is a literally deceased person of exerting his physical powers. (2) That there are certain obstacles in God’s way, which prevent his calling these dead sinners to life: these are the stone upon the mouth of the sepulchre, which christians are called upon to remove. (3) It was sagaciously hinted, that if the friends of Lazarus had refused to take away the stone, in the case under notice, that Christ could not have called him to life; and, from analogy, it was supposed, that if when God proposes to work by his spirit for the renovation of dead sinners, the saints refuse to co-operate, and prepare his way, *the work of Jehovah cannot go on.* Such was the sum of Mr. M——’s discourse, and the burthen of the several prayers put up at the close, was, “Oh Lord! poor sinners are dead and in their graves around us—thou awaitest to awake them to spiritual life—but requirest in this solemn business the co-operation of thy people. Oh, help us then to take away the stone, that they may not remain dead to all eternity through our neglect.”

Mr. B—— preached from the words, “*Their feet shall slide in due time,*” from which he assumed, (1) That God has a set time from eternity for all the work he performs, (inclusive of the saving or damning of sinners,) and, therefore, (2) It must not be presumed from the fact that sinners, long in rebellion, are yet out of hell, that God’s mercy will always endure toward them, for “their feet shall slide in due time.” (3) “It might be,” the preacher remarked, “that God had appointed the close of that very meeting as the time when the feet of many of the congregation, still remaining hardened, should slide into unending burnings. They were therefore solemnly admonished to submit without delay, and avert this dreadful doom.” Avert a doom appointed from eternity!

Mr. A—— chose the following words: “*For ye know that afterward, when he would have received the blessing, he was rejected, and found no place for repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.*” There is allusion here to the history of Jacob and

Esau. The latter, when it was too late, indulged in unavailing regrets at having sold his birth-right, and implored his father, in the most moving manner, to bless him in such terms of benediction as he could, consistently with what he had already invoked upon the head of his brother Jacob; the poor old father was much moved for his unfortunate son, and most fervently complied with his desire. The preacher, however, disregarded all the analogies in the case, and assumed from his text, (1) That each sinner has a certain term of time allotted him, within which he may secure the salvation of his soul. (2) If he fail to improve this space, no future opportunities for this great business will be afforded him; "the divine wrath will kindle, and blaze against him to all eternity—he will cry out from the depths of his wretchedness in hell, in order to move God to compassion, but all in vain—he will find no place for repentance *in the divine mind*—(there was in Isaac's, however!)—no pity—no relentance there: the forked lightnings of Almighty anger shall scath and blast the sinner with every stroke." Had it been the preacher's object to depict his Maker's character in the most repulsive colors, he could not have succeeded in that business better than he did. The mind instinctively recoiled with loathing from the contemplation of a being, clothed with almighty power, and exerting it for the infliction of the most horrid torments upon impotent worms.

Mr. S——, who preached the next sermon in course, evidently thought that the chords of horror had been so often and so violently struck during the meeting, that they had nearly lost their power to vibrate; he therefore touched an opposite note. He read for his text, "*Is there no balm in Gilead?*" His prayer also, and the hymns he selected, were in the same strain. He began with

"Sinners, will you scorn the message,  
Sent in mercy from above?  
Every sentence, oh, how tender!  
Every line is full of love.  
Listen to it—  
Every line is full of love."

"Is it so?" mentally inquired our heroine, whose orthodoxy by this time, (truth must be told,) had begun to stagger under the load of nauseous and contradictory stuff to which, for several days in succession, she had been listening. "Is it then the fact, that

*every line* in the message from heaven to man, *is full of love?* Then, indeed, have I not heard one line of this message since this meeting began, until this moment! for all here has been *wrath—vengeance—damnation—horror—malediction!* What am I to think of all this?"

Last of all, arose Mr. F——, the great, the notorious Mr. F——, who was kept to the last as a sort of force in reserve, that when the congregation had become fatigued in body and mind—their spirits jaded—their nervous systems morbidly excitable—he might then strike a decisive blow, and secure an easy victory. Mr. F—— rolled his large eyes over the audience for some time in silence, affecting to peruse every countenance, in order, it would seem, that he might estimate the degree of resistance that still remained to be overcome. At length, assuming a stern aspect, and modulating his voice to a tone of hoarse and triumphant bitterness, he announced his text from Proverbs—" *The scorner shall scorn alone.*" My pen, thou art a feeble thing; I will not trust thee in the attempt to describe the harangue that followed—the task surpasses thy powers. I can only say, that from beginning to ending, it was as disgusting and horrid a *melange* as the alphabet of the English, or any other tongue, was ever combined to form. His soul revelled in the infernal pictures which his fancy drew: he completely personated the deity of his own descriptions; his countenance, voice, attitudes, all evinced, that, for the time, he imagined himself the almighty avenger of human crime: and with what eagerness did his ears drink in the groans and shrieks of suffering spirits, from his ideal abyss of wrath! "*Ye shall scorn alone!*" he tauntingly responded again and again, as he imitated these cries with his own hoarse tones, and fancied them realities. "Water! water! for my burning tongue!" "Ah! ye wretched sinners! where now are your insulting scoffs at God's people? You are each too much occupied with your individual agonies, I trow, to unite longer in this business; and now to all eternity you must '*scorn alone!*'"

Such was the closing exercise of this twelve-days' meeting—such the sermon that had wrought so powerfully upon poor Bridget Bounce, which was "something about getting religion," she *believed*, and the text for which was found, she *expected*, "somewhere in the book of Paul!"

## CHAPTER V.

How much of happiness, hope, intellect, has been wrecked beyond repair, and how much of family and social discord has been engendered, by extravagant and fanatical proceedings, bearing the name of religious worship, the omniscient God alone is capable of determining: a few local details only fall within the range of mortal ken. I have not taken it upon me to ascertain the result of the operations on *THE POINT*—I know, however, that a lad of very bright promise, in his 16th year, a clerk and chief agent in the employ of an eminent member of the bench in that county, was converted by their means into a maniac for life. I also know that the meeting utterly failed of effecting the object for which it was gotten up; that on the contrary, it even had a reaction against it, as might have been foreseen by the agents in the business, had not the adage, “whom the gods purpose to destroy, they first make mad,” had some kind of verification in their case.

The public there had been advertised that a traveling advocate of the *universal love of heaven* would preach in their academy on the evening of the day which was to close the long meeting. The famous Mr. F—— adverted to this fact in his sermon in the morning, with ineffable contempt; he cautioned his people at the peril of their souls against hearing the stranger, and ended his notice of him by very charitably assigning him a final doom amongst those who “*shall scorn alone.*” This very allusion to the stranger, induced one of his hearers, a transient sojourner on *THE POINT*, to resolve, for the first time in his life, on hearing this new doctrine for himself; not, however, with the remotest intention of believing a word of it—but in this he was greatly and agreeably disappointed, for at the close of the sermon, which was nowise remarkable for talent, either in the composition or delivery, but was somewhat so for an unaffected simplicity of arrangement and diction, he arose before all present and avowed himself a convert to its doctrine, declaring that he had never before heard preaching which so came home to his understanding, and carried conviction to his judgment, as did that.

Poor Waters! he soon experienced that he had pushed out his

skiff on a troubled sea. Supposing that all might be convinced by the evidence which had satisfied his own mind, he began zealously to advocate his new faith. Ha, ha! he found very few disposed to even hear him! not even to hear him quote from the bible! and of those too whom he had often heard confess themselves as "poor, erring mortals," and with much affected humiliation, pray that God would "lead the blind by a way that they knew not," and "set their feet in the paths of truth." His own brother, a deacon of the church, to visit whom he had traveled some hundreds of miles, actually denied him the hospitalities of his house, for the sin of having therein given utterance to his newly acquired views, and he was therefore fain to take up his lodgings at one of the public inns of the place! Even such is but too frequently the triumph, which the dark spirit of human creeds achieves in the hearts of men, over the heaven-born spirit of charity.

We mortals, and those of us too who term ourselves christians, are very modest and unpretending beings, *very*; we bow ourselves humbly down before the throne of heaven, owning that we are blind and impotent, and most devoutly imploring superior guidance; when, should the Being we supplicate vouchsafe an answer to our petitions, we would spurn his instructions with scorn if they accorded not with our preconceived opinions.

A few days after our heroine had resumed her school in Universalism, a note was brought her, by a little girl, a daughter of one of the few families in the place who held a different religious faith from that which generally prevailed there. The note set forth, that, as the universalists were to hold an association in the church, on the Wednesday and Thursday evening, and as it was understood that Miss Alice purposed attending the religious services on the occasion, this was to apprise her that the writer, as one of her employers, would not consent that the school should be suspended for those two days. \* \* "For the yuniversalers," (so ran the scrawl,) "havn't no religion in no shape nor fashion no how, and shudent ought to be kowntenansed by the peepal of God, i was willin yu shud tend the meetin on the PINT, all tho im no more a kalwinite than nothin at all, but the kalwins beleev in bein born agin, which i doo too, and i kan kownte Nanse them, bekase they may be will see like us sum day. So no more at present.

DOLLY TROWLER."

"A pretty specimen, this," thought Alice, "of the ignorance and intolerance in religion, with which churches that take a high stand for sanctity of character, quite sufficiently abound! And I more than suspect that the root of all this uncharitableness lies in the doctrinal principles on which these churches are based."—Alice was right—but coming from her, reared as she had been, in fanaticism, it was a large and serious concession. Facts, however, abundantly justified it. She could not but observe, that under much exterior devoutness, and connected with much scrupulosity in the observance of times and ordinances, there was in the people of her faith a too general absence of the more substantial and fundamental virtues of religion. She could no longer think that these evil fruits of a bad faith were *local*, with regard to the persons exhibiting them, for a very recent letter from Connecticut, written at the request of her parents by their minister, convinced her that there also a gloomy theology generated in its possessors a spirit like itself. The letter referred to, appeared to have been despatched in great haste, and expressed very great solicitude, which had, it seems, been awakened on her behalf by the perusal of the one she had written. "I was immediately aware," so it ran, "though your parents were not, that your immortal soul was in the utmost danger, from the fact that you had most unfortunately fallen in with a community of universalists, a people more to be avoided than deists or atheists, because they affect to found their faith on the scriptures, and possess a fatal talent for giving a plausible face to their impious and blasphemous tenets; I, therefore, in the name of your parents, and in consideration of your own precious eternal interests, solemnly charge you to shun them, as you would the pit of perdition! You talk of their *social and moral virtues*; by as much as they seem to possess these, are they the more to be dreaded, for even the arch fiend can, when it suits his purpose, 'transform himself into an angel of light.' You must therefore not take them for what they seem to be, but for what in fact they are, enemies to God, and to the souls of men. Their doctrine is the siren's song: it lulls the soul, by its bewitching melody, into a slumber from which many thousands of its votaries, it is to be feared, have been awaked at last by the fires that never shall be quenched. It may do to live by, but to persons of that class, the language of the poet will apply with peculiar truth.

‘Fools men may live, but fools they seldom die.’

“It is rarely known that men die universalists. I hope you will pardon the freedom of this advice, and believe me to be your sincere well wisher for time and eternity. ZACCHEUS FEARON.”

To this letter several postscripts were appended by different members of the family, with whom it had been left unsealed for that purpose. I will here insert but one of these, from our heroine’s youngest sister, an arch and playful girl; it is as follows:

“P. S. Who the mischief are these universalists of whom parson Fearon speaks? do they look like folk, Alice? We have prayers put up in our church for all sorts of heathen; Mahometans, Hottentots, and the like; but I never heard universalists prayed for yet, therefore I think their chance for heaven is very slim, don’t you, Alice? If you should ever leave our church, do turn Pagan, for every spare rag and rye-straw about here is being turned into money, to pay the way for their salvation. So no more at present, from one who never saw your soul, but loves your body dreadful well. CHARITY SHERWOOD.”

In all respects Alice admired the inhabitants of Universalia, with the exception that they were less serious and devout in their general demeanor than comported with her ideas of piety; she remarked upon this defect to a very intimate companion of hers (the taller of the two young ladies described in chapter 3.) and inquired how she would account for it. “Simply, my dear Alice,” was the answer, “by considering the true nature and ends of the religion of Christ. Does it not communicate glad tidings? and is it not in the nature of things for these to infuse joy into the heart? and when the spirit is joyful, will not the countenance be bathed in its light? Why, I have seen persons in the act of uniting themselves to churches termed christian, and the forms of induction were of so sombre a character, that by the time they were gone through with, the subjects, in look and bearing, resembled culprits who had been consigned over to the executioner. Surely, they or I greatly mistake the character of this religion: I identify it with all that is beautiful and happifying in morals—all that is mag-nanimous in action. I connect with it no hollow and driveling affectation of self-abasement, for the office of christianity is to

elevate man—not to trample down his spirit, his dignity, and his hopes, and” — “You are preaching again, my dear J——,” interrupted Alice, “so I must call you down to the level of ordinary conversation. Of one thing I am satisfied in regard to your religion, Mr. Fearon’s declaration to the contrary notwithstanding; *it will do to die by*—for to that fact I have witnessed several examples since I have sojourned with you here.” “I will furnish you with the account of another, and very striking one,” said Miss J——. “It is contained in a letter from a young minister in our connection to my uncle.”

She took the letter from her scrip, and read the account as follows: “I was last week riding in fulfilment of a round of appointments, when I met a young man and woman in a dearborn, with a coffin between them, which, on our stopping to converse, they informed me contained the corpse of a sister of theirs, in her 19th year, who had deceased at the house of another sister in Mt. Pleasant, and they were taking the corpse to inter it in the family burial place. ‘Could you not officiate on the occasion?’ they inquired. I informed them it was not possible, and inquired how it happened that *I* was applied to? when I had always understood the young woman to be of a very different faith. ‘So she was till within a month or two of her death,’ was the reply, ‘and it grieved her sister, in whose house she died, very much, that she should adopt your faith at so critical a time.’ But so it was—one minister was sent for after another by her friends, to effect a change in her views, but in vain. Reasoning and threatening were equally ineffectual. ‘I have been living,’ she would say ‘as you all know, in daily expectation of death for the last five months—I have in that time reflected much on religion. Without other aid than that of my bible, I have settled into my present persuasion—and can you now think to frighten me out of opinions which have been adopted under such circumstances? It cannot be; I am immoveably made up to die in them!’ I knew there was a little society of universalists in the place where she died, composed of some most estimable persons, and I inquired whether her sister was so hard-hearted as not to send for one of them. They informed me, that, on the contrary, the poor young woman was kept as ignorant as possible of the very existence of such a society. Oh! what



would I not have given to have been but one hour by her dying pillow ! that I might have dilated upon that impartial and unbounded love, to whose hands in that trying juncture she was so calmly entrusting her all of hope and happiness for ever. But she died alone, poor girl ! Still it was a consolation to me to know, that her faith proved equal to the severe trial to which it was subjected.”—“ Let me interrupt your reading here,” said Alice ; “ supposing they could have extorted from the fears of the dying girl a retraction of her principles, what object would they have gained ? would such retraction, wrung from her weakness, have atoned for errors deliberately adopted in the strength of her faculties ?” “ If, by any means,” answered Miss F—., “ they could have succeeded in wringing from her a denial of her faith, they would thereby have accomplished an important party purpose ; the circumstance would have been loudly trumpeted forth as an evidence that ‘ *the Universalist belief will not do to die by.*’ I have known the death-beds of the young and inexperienced to be haunted for this special end ! Still, we may adopt a more charitable view of their conduct : their efforts may have been stimulated by the weak supposition that the Creator will damn mortals for their errors of opinion ! a supposition which does great injustice to his character, unquestionably. But we will proceed with the letter” \* \* \* “ At a conference prayer-meeting in the town, on the sabbath evening following this melancholy incident, a self-conceited sprig of divinity arose, and after the usual groans and distortions of countenance, delivered himself to the following effect. ‘ My friends, the young woman who was interred in our grave-yard a few days since, and who died in rebellion against God, and rejection of his truth, was offered a conveyance to a protracted meeting some time before her decease, but she refused to avail of it, and now—Oh !—Oh !—Oh !—she’s gone where protracted-meeting opportunities will no more be afforded her !’

“ And who, think you, was this young saint ? what were his pretensions ? I will state a fact from which you may judge. He had had the charge of the school in that district, but was deprived of the same about a month before the delivery of the above recorded speech, for having repeatedly taken indelicate

liberties with the young females entrusted to his care! This is an unexaggerated truth." \* \* \* \* \*

"I have known," said our heroine, "just such lumpish boobies in Connecticut; and they could deliver themselves quite as edifyingly in conference prayer-meetings. That is a species of meeting to which I was accustomed at home from my infancy; and for as long back as I can remember, Deacon Snaffle invariably took the lead in it. I doubt if he once failed in all that time, to thank the Lord, that 'while others who are as good by nature as we are, and much better by practice, are trying the a-w-e-ful realities of eternity, we continue to be the spa-red monuments of thy dis-tin-guish-ing grace and mercy.' The good man's voice was so cracked, that its sounds wonderfully resembled the monotonous jingle of a cow-bell. I have often checked my sister Charity, for nicknaming him 'Old Brindle,' which was the name of a favourite bell-cow of ours. 'Old Brindle,' she would say, 'wants to make out that hell contains better folk than we are! I'm sure then it can't want for good society. But what are we to think of our Creator's justice, if he does indeed damn many, who are much better than others whom he saves?' We could none of us answer the questions of the playful girl; so we all united in chiding her for what we termed her *wickedness* in asking them." "There is an admirable stoicism," said Miss J—. "in our manner of talking about hell, and its inhabitants. Our bigotry damns men very liberally, and saves them very sparingly. Woe to us all if our Creator were as indifferent to our eternal interests as we seem to be to those of one another! My grandfather, the old squire, who, like most old people, is very garrulous, often entertains me with the Scotchman's prayer:

'Lord bless me and my wife,  
My son John and his wife;  
Us four,  
No more, my Lord, I care for no more.'

## CHAPTER VI.

WERE you ever present, reader, at an universalist association? If you were, you need not that I describe one to you; if not, my advice to you is that you witness one for yourself as soon as pos-

sible ; you will thereby obtain a better idea of such a meeting than any verbal description of mine can give you : and, moreover, there are shades of difference in the same thing at different times, and in different places. You must therefore be content for the present with a sketch of that which took place in *Universalia*, and was the one referred to in the chaste and classical note of *Dolly Trowler*.

My soul ! it is a goodly sight to see some fifteen or twenty hundred persons together, with eager attention, and joy-beaming eyes, listening to the embassy of pardon and love from heaven ! No sighs of anguish are heard there, I trow ; no screams of terror ; far other music greets the ear than that arising from crushed hopes and broken hearts ; for there are unfolded the riches of divine grace, as revealed in the covenant of promise.

“ And there, in strains as sweet as angels use,  
The gospel whispers peace.”

Among the hearers on that occasion, was one who had been confined to her bed for many years from a paralytic stroke ; yet even she had been brought a distance of forty miles to enjoy the happy influences of this glad meeting. The wagon containing the couch on which she lay was drawn close against the church window, which was left open in order that the accents of mercy from the preacher's lips might reach her ears. It is scarcely possible, methinks, to be present on such an occasion without appreciating the apostolic exclamation, “ How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth glad tidings ; that publisheth peace ; that saith to Zion, thy God liveth ; that preacheth good tidings of good ! ”

The intervals between the times of worship being too short to admit of the congregation repairing to their respective homes for refreshment, provisions, in basket loads, were taken to the place occupied for the transaction of business, (which was the school house afore-described,) and were spread out on a common table, to which, without respect to rank, or condition, or opinions, all that would come might come, and partake freely, “ without money and without price.” Had you been there, reader, you could not, for the life of you, have distinguished between the clergy and the laics. All were on a parity ; all distinctions of cast were lost sight of ; all individualities were merged in the

mass : and as one family all rejoiced together in a common and glorious hope.

Oh, but I would like passing well to be able to give you the outline of the sermons delivered at this meeting ! but space will not permit. The general themes were :—The immeasurable love of God as manifested to man through Christ Jesus ; the perfect wisdom and benevolence of all the divine dispensations, throughout all space and all duration ; the happiness inevitably attendant upon virtue, and misery upon vice ; man's obligations to man, and to God ; and how the due discharge of these is promotive of public and private good ; the resurrection of all mankind to an incorruptible, immortal, and glorious state ; the final extinction of death, suffering, sin ; and the reconciliation of all intelligences to their all-perfect and benevolent Creator ; that he may be *all in all*. These are but the general and more prominent topics ; but within this grand outline many beautiful particulars were comprised. I am tempted to give you a sketch of the closing discourse, by Mr. S—.; from it you may, with some approach to accuracy, infer the general character of the whole.

His text was from Matthew 6, 34 : “Take therefore no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself—Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.” “It seems the scope and purpose of the popular theology,” said the preacher, “to shed a frightful gloom upon man's vision of the future ; to people that future with horrid phantoms, and thereby to encumber him with perplexities and harassing forecasts of evil ; as if the brief path from the cradle to death were not already sufficiently thorny and tearful. The advice contained in the text, must have been designed by the benevolent Savior, as a preventive of this superstitious folly on the part of weak and blind humanity.

“If man is indeed,” continued Mr. S—. “ushered into the world an *infant demon*, full of malignant hatred toward his Creator, (of whom he is utterly ignorant, as of all things else,) and a subject of that Creator's wrath, and that wrath has kindled for his spirit, in a world beyond the grave, a furnace of intense and unquenchable fires ; and man has but the short and precarious term of his mortal life allowed him, within which to appease that wrath and avoid those fires ; if all this be the case, then indeed is his utmost solicitude about the future fully justified ; and

with all his agonising sensibility on that head, he falls unspeakably short of being so to a sufficient degree. But then, what are we to think of the Savior's precept? Does he not positively interdict this solicitude, on the ground, that each day has its own sufficient evil?

"Oh!" exclaimed Mr. S—. "perish for ever that dark and blighting theology, whose business it seems to spread additional thorns in the pathway of life, and engender distrusts of that almighty love, by which in all our sufferings and dangers we are constantly over-watched!" And he proceeded to point out the grounds for a confidence in heaven; for a cheerful acquiescence in all the divine allotments during the present, and a suppression of all anxieties about the future, save such as are indispensable to a proper regard for our well-being, and for that of the creatures dependant on our care and providence. "Man's interests beyond the grave," said he, "are in infinitely better hands than his own; in his whose love for him exceeds that of a mother's for her offspring by as much as an atom is exceeded by infinity; in those hands they are safe; and it was a consideration of this fact without doubt that dictated the text before us, interdicting all distressing solicitude about the future.

"This life," said the preacher, "hath its own sufficient and substantial miseries, and it is quite unnecessary to pry into an unseen world—a *terra incognita*, and to tantalise ourselves with those unreal, those shadowy horrors, by which a false religion ever seeks to bolster up its pretensions.

"Nevertheless," continued the preacher, "though I admit that this world is sufficiently sorrowful, and, to a certain extent, properly termed a 'vale of tears,' yet do I not fully sympathise in those sickly repinings at its miseries and vanities, which are too commonly drawled out from the pulpit, for the world is the workmanship of God; and it is correspondently beautiful—beautiful surpassing description. Its mountains and valleys, hills and plains, rivulets, rivers, lakes, oceans; its infinitely diversified forms and colours;—for it embraces all the hues of the rainbow variously blended and combined: all are beautiful. Then the sun pours down upon it a flood of glory by day, and the moon mantles it with a silver radiancy by night; and oh! is not the canopy beautiful when it is scintillating with its millions of stars! And

there is much of *moral* beauty too in this much-abused world of ours, maugre all that the bigot, and the cynical philosopher may say to the contrary. See, for instance, maternal love, 'strong as death,' bending over the cradle of infancy, and the couch of affliction; see hearts united by mutual affection reciprocally sustaining each other through long, long years of trial and suffering: see—in short, amidst the darker aspects of human life, on which gloomy theologians are wont to dwell, there are transpiring a thousand scenes to engage the approving notice of all-seeing Heaven. Yes, this is a beautiful world.

"Yet ought we to remember," said Mr. S—., "that it is not our abiding home, nor does it afford to man's unbounded spirit sufficient scope for the expansion of its powers: we may therefore look forward to a world beyond the precincts of time and death; not with gloomy forecasts of evil, but in the cheering hope of ere long dwelling in its realms of sinless purity, and of basking forever in its cloudless light. It is with this kind purpose that the hand of religion draws aside the screen which conceals future things; that from the prospects of a better world we may gather encouragements to sustain us under the trials and sorrows of this: she whispers to man's doubting heart the cordial assurance, that the wings of divine protection are ever over him; amidst the vicissitudes of life she points his hopes to a more enduring and changeless existence; and she dries up his tears, by referring him to a time when all tears shall be wiped, and cease to flow for ever and forevermore."

The preacher closed his discourse with some excellent observations, tending to reconcile man to his condition on earth while he stays here, and to leave it with cheerfulness when called hence to a better inheritance; to beget in his bosom sentiments of kindness, and good-will toward his fellow man; to incite him to a willing discharge of all his obligations, and to swell his heart with love and gratitude to God, for the revelations of his love through Jesus Christ. In reference to the forbearance necessary to be exercised toward those who differ from us in religious faith, he used, I thought, a very pretty comparison.

"You and I, my brother," said he, "take our stand on a high eminence, whence we can command a wide prospect of hills, and plains, and forests, and streams, stretching away in the distance

as far as the eye can reach ; the sun is setting, and to me it seems to be dipping down into the very bosom of a lake in the distance. ‘In the lake!’ you exclaim, with great surprise ; ‘why I can see hills far, far beyond ; and the sun seems to be immediately over them!’ Now the difference here, my brother, must be owing to the superior strength of your visual organs over mine, enabling you to see much farther than I ; and I should be almost beside myself to quarrel with you for such a cause. Well, then, you ought to bear with another, if to his mental vision, the divine and infinite love—the sun of the moral universe—seems to shed its beams upon all intelligences, insomuch that not one can ever get beyond its vital and cheering influences ; whilst to your more restricted perception there seem to be millions whom the light of that sun will never touch, and millions upon millions in regard to whom, after life’s brief day, it will set to rise no more, leaving them in rayless darkness and despair for ever and ever.”

I can assure you, reader, that whoever was an uninterested auditor during the services of this association, our heroine was not ; her ear seemed eagerly to drink in every word ; she had never in all her life witnessed religion under aspects so attractive ; it seemed to her that the prevalent and ardent anticipations of heavenly bliss had brought down its realities to earth. “The poet may here be quoted with truth and emphasis,” thought she,

“Every sentence, oh how tender !  
Every line is full of love.”

As the meeting was about to close, the preachers, who were now together in the desk, or within the area around it, united their voices with the choir in the opposite gallery, in singing that beautiful hymn,

“Rise, my soul, and stretch thy wings,  
Thy better portion take ;”

and every heart seemed to heave with a pang of regret, when the parting benediction was invoked.

“Well Alice,” archly remarked Miss J—., as they walked arm in arm to her father’s house, “you see that we *publicans and sinners* engage, occasionally, in the worship of God after our heathenish fashion ; we omit, it is true, what many seem to consider as the chief essential in the business, viz : the imagery of a dark infernum, with its myriads of lost spirits, groaning to the

glory of God from beds of burning coals. But, on the whole, and bating this beautiful item, tell me, Alice, how did you like the meeting?"

Alice made no response save by pressing the arm of her companion with her own, with an emphasis which indicated that she was in no mood for discourse, but rather for silent communion with her own thoughts; and they, accordingly, prosecuted the residue of the short walk to Miss J—'s paternal residence in silence.

I may here inform the reader that Miss J— lives in the first house above the humble edifice in which Alice holds her school; it is in nearly the most pleasant part of the valley; to the westward may be seen, at some distance across the beautiful plain, some glimpses of the Susquehanna, meandering like a broad riband of silver through the lovely landscape, and laughing in the sunbeams, as if conscious it were imparting to that landscape its principal charm. On the east, the part of the hill just opposite, is somewhat depressed, and marked with one or two slight openings or defiles, formed probably by the occasional rivulets which congregate after heavy rains; it is also somewhat rounded from the same cause, and presents several convex slopes, with narrow passages between, which are smooth, or appear so in the distance, and covered with grass; these give to this point of the valley a very picturesque effect. It was by one of these passages that Alice gained the position on the hill-side, where she found the "Old Squire," (as described in chapter 3) and she was now irresistibly led to seek the same spot, that she might be perfectly alone, and once more feast her eyes with the prospect to be obtained from that eminence. I have said *once more*, for her parents had by letter expressly enjoined her instant return to Connecticut.

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## CHAPTER VII.

"OH! for an angel's harp! and an angel's skill to touch its chords and awaken its harmonies! for human language falls immeasurably short of themes so grand and extatic. Henceforth and forever I abjure all impious distrusts of my almighty Father's



love ! I shall as soon believe that infinite duration can be exhausted by its successive flow of moments or of ages, as that the infinite ocean of divine love can be drained by its ceaseless expansion upon the innumerable myriads of creatures to which it has given existence. Henceforth as I walk abroad, I shall perceive in everything and everywhere its all-pervading presence, its all-beautifying and vitalizing influences. 'Twill sparkle in every star of night ; 'twill scintillate in every solar ray ; in all the voices of nature I shall hear its music ; it will touch with balm the wounds of my heart in sorrow and bereavement ; it will shed its mild light on the darkness of adversity : and in the strife of the passions, and amid the storms and alarms of life, borrowing the voice of its once embodied and crucified representative on earth ; it will say "*peace*," and an immediate "*calm*" shall succeed. I am—I am constrained to be—a universalist, and, whatever obloquy may attach to that name, such for the future will I avow myself, for life and death, time, and eternity, all things, present in the light of this faith a new and beauteous aspect."

Call this rhapsody, reader, if it so please you, it is the language in which the full soul of our heroine vented itself, when she had been for some minutes seated in the shade of the clump of sumachs afore-noticed, where she had had her interview with the "Old Squire." The afternoon was most lovely—the atmosphere pure and serene—and the wide-spread panorama before her seemed even more beauteous than before. The main road through the bottom, and the several paths diverging from it in various directions, seemed teeming with life—persons on foot, on horseback, in carriages, were repairing from the meeting to their several homes ; here and there stood groups of friends reciprocating adieus, and invitations for future visits : it was in a double sense a moving scene. "Oh !" continued Alice, as she gazed upon it, "most truly said Mr. S—, 'this is a beautiful world ;' it is indeed so ; and more especially *now* to me, since my perceptions, I trust, are much improved ; for yonder *NARROWS*, as they are termed, both in name and nature might well represent my former state of mind ; but I now see the heavens, the earth, all things, to be mantled with the smiles of almighty love, and every living creature to be a subject of his benign regards. Yes, I am quite brought into a new faith, new hope, new

feelings ; and I shrink not from henceforth bearing the despised name corresponding to these new views."

\* \* \* \* \*

I need only add, that the above resolution has been faithfully adhered to : Alice has been for some time at her native home, in Connecticut, where, although opposed on every hand, and by those too whom she respects and loves, she unshrinkingly avows herself a believer in the plainly scriptural doctrine, that 'The Lord is good unto all, and his tender mercy is over all his works ;' and this glorious faith is a principal theme in the epistolary correspondence which she maintains with Miss J—, her intimate and amiable companion while a sojourner in the Pennsylvania Valley. We will close our story with an extract from a recent letter of hers to this young lady, from which the reader will perceive, that, at whatever sacrifice to her private interests, Alice is bent on maintaining her despised faith in the midst of its most violent, but perhaps, conscientious opponents.

\* \* \* \* \* "I did not inform you that in returning to my native home, I chose the longer route up the Susquehanna to the very pleasant village of Unadilla, on the western margin, and just above the mouth of a lovely river of the same name : thence across to the Katskil turnpike, from which I diverged to Delhi, a beautiful town on the Delaware, and but little more than a score of miles from its sources : thence over the most barren and dreary mountain ranges conceivable to Kingston or Sopus ; and to Roundout, on the North river, where the Delaware and Hudson canal terminates : thence across to Hyde Park, distinguished for its elegant country seats ; and so on to Poughkeepsie, Dover Plains, &c. I might have gone by the shorter way of the Great Bend, Coshecton, and Newburgh, but I had no particular motives for haste, and merely consulted pleasantness.

"In the sitting-room at Roundout, an animated conversation ensued on the subject of religion. A young universalist minister being there on a professional visit, his doctrine became the topic of discussion. Of course I was an interested auditor. My attention had been attracted toward an intelligent German in the company, by the peculiar benevolence of his sentiments. Governor Shultz, of Pennsylvania, had pardoned a criminal under sentence of death, as his last official act. All the company (being believers

in endless woe) reprobated the ex-Governor on this ground, with the exception of the German, who bestowed unqualified praise upon his clemency; remarking, that *'if forgiveness be a crime, then God has committed more of it than any other being.'* Indeed all he said was so much in the spirit of him who told the sinful woman, 'neither do I condemn thee—go and sin no more,' that I concluded within myself, 'Surely this person does not believe in a Deity who will damn his creatures to an eternity of misery for their sins of a few years; or if he does, his dispositions are not conformed to those of that Deity.'

"I was correct in regard to my German fellow-traveller; he had, to be sure, never before heard of the Universalist sect, but when informed of what the term implied his eyes sparkled with delight, and especially on being told that this denomination is numerous and rapidly increasing: he assured us that all benevolent literary men, whether catholic or protestant, were secretly of this persuasion; and although the most of them did not choose to incur ecclesiastical censure by openly avowing it, yet that it is sufficiently intelligible in their writings, and he entertained us with very numerous quotations which fully sustained the remark.

"If the fact is as stated, I conceive it to form a strong consideration in favor of the truth of our sentiments; but then I reflected that Cowper, that most benevolent of all poets, was a rigid Calvinist, and, therefore, an undoubted exception to the truth of the observation; and yet, upon further thought, I find that it does hold good even in regard to him, for there are passages in his *TASK* which show that from his better nature a benign light occasionally flashed upon the darkness of his educational creed; or, in other words, that his kind heart often dragged per force his head (vitiated by false religious culture) into a purer and manlier train of thinking than that which his gloomy creed inspired. Take the following sample.

'Thus heavenward all things tend, for all was once  
Perfect, and all at length must be restored.  
So God hath wisely purposed, who would else  
In his dishonor'd works, himself endure  
Dishonor, and be wrong'd without redress."

"The mind that dictated these lines could not possibly, at the time, have believed that Jehovah will be eternally dishonored by

the total and irreparable ruin of the fairest portion of his workmanship.

"I find, indeed, my dear J—, that all that is beautiful in sentiment is in reality connected with this doctrine; and that the most sublime and admired minds have indeed in every nation and age, so far as my reading extends, been more or less illumined by it. Who that has read with attention the works of Pope, Addison, Goldsmith, Akenside, Thompson, Gray, Fenelon, Schiller, Goethe, and others, can seriously doubt the fact? Would that the minds of my aged parents could be open to perceive its truth! How serene would the evening of their existence be, if the divine light of this faith were blended with the beams of their setting sun!

"I am more than ever convinced, my friend, that the doctrine of unending misery, in the proportion in which it is sincerely believed, blunts the natural sensibilities. How else could its advocates remain so manifestly indifferent with the dreadful prospect before them, that countless multitudes of human beings are constantly drifting on the tide of time to never-ceasing burnings? My parents, for instance, (and they are to the full as kind as parents commonly are,) seem to have quite given me over to eternal reprobation: yet they appear but little affected by this circumstance! I ventured to ask them as we sat around the fire a few evenings since, whether, if I were bound to a stake to be burned alive in their presence, they would not be unspeakably afflicted by the event. 'We would, undoubtedly,' replied my father, 'but spiritual things are not to be compared with natural; our carnal attachments will have ceased when we reach the eternal world; and we shall not retain a single feeling in opposition to the will of God; whether that will be to damn or to save.' I was strongly tempted to respond, that except the divine Being shall undergo as great a change as we, his *will* must be, as it now is, to 'have *all* men to be *saved* and to come to a knowledge of the truth.' But I knew that to reason with him on this subject would rather tend to irritate than to convince him: and I therefore preferred to be silent, as it better comported with the respect due to the parent from the child.

"My new faith subjects me to numerous petty annoyances. If I attend upon preaching in any of the churches, I am sure to find a part of the sermon pointed against myself; and the heads of

my acquaintances will be turned around in order to see how I am affected by it. I cannot be present even at a prayer meeting but the several supplicants will for prayer substitute declamation and argument against my doctrine, as though Jehovah himself needed to be convinced of its falsity! Some attempt to gain me over to their views by flattery; they wonder at a person of my sense and accomplishments being a universalist. Others address themselves to my interests; they pretend that a conformity to their opinions is indispensable, in order to one's admittance into the higher circles of society; and yet these same persons term themselves 'the despised and persecuted followers of Jesus'!

"Parson Fearon seriously advised me the other day, in presence of my mother and sister Charity, as I respected myself, my parents, and connexions, and as I prized my soul, and christian fellowship on earth, &c. to disavow my false and dangerous opinions. 'Would you have me be a hypocrite, Mr. Fearon,' said I, 'for such I should certainly be, if, for any motive, I should disavow opinions which I seriously and heartily believe: my opinions may give way before sufficient evidence of their falsity, but mere persuasions addressed to my pride or self-love, however they may bias my *will*, can surely not remove the convictions of my judgment. But,' continued I, after a little pause, and (I will confess it) with the view of bringing him out plainly, for I suspected that to gain numbers to his church was more a real object with him (as with too many others) than to win souls for heaven, — 'what would you think if I were to unite myself to the methodists?' — 'I should think you had gone from bad to worse,' said he; 'you had better remain as you are, Alice, for the methodists believe in being a *saint* to-day and a *devil* to-morrow, which is flatly contradictory to the bible doctrine of final perseverance.' In this sentiment my father (who came in during the conversation) fully united.

A few days subsequent I had an interview with the methodist minister, Mr. Steiningstinger, (rather a long name,) whose opinion was, that to go over from the universalist to the calvinist belief, was 'like jumping out of der fire into der frying-pan; for, mine Got in heavens! I would a goot teal rader pe a universalist as pe a calvinist.' The singularity is, that each of these sectarists affects to believe the faith of the other at least *safe* for salvation,

while they both agree in thinking the universalist faith *unsafe*; and yet each, rather than be *saved* in the faith of the other, would prefer to be *damned* in that of universal salvation! Such at least is the result to which their professions are reducible.

“I assure you, my dear J—, that my faith gathers confirmation from nearly every day’s observation and experience. I cannot tell you how much I rejoice and thank God that ever I was a sojourner in your beautiful valley, for my new faith is a talisman which blends a hitherto unknown delight with every scene and incident of existence. I had the unspeakable pleasure, but two days ago, of so establishing its truth and exhibiting its excellency to a neighboring woman, whose spirit for some time past has been fluttering at the gates of death, that she has become a confirmed and rejoicing subject of its influence. ‘Oh!’ she exclaims, ‘I can now die satisfied; I can now part with my husband and children, and my kind neighbors too, in the confidence of meeting them again in a brighter world; there the sun never sets, for God is that sun, and all intelligences shall bask in its beams. I formerly,’ said she, ‘often surveyed my little ones with an anxious heart, reflecting that they were about to be left in a world of sin and temptation, where the probability was strong that they would not *all* escape that dark and dreadful pit of irreparable perdition which I conceived to be yawning beneath their feet; and I used to ask myself, which of these—Oh! my God! the thought was full of agony—which of these that have been nourished in my bosom, and have engaged my anxieties by night and by day; over whose cradles I have watched in their sickness until the stars grew dim in the morning light, and bright and dim again—which of these, and how many, shall I have brought up for endless burnings? But now—God be praised for ever more!—these anxieties are all dispelled, and I can leave them with Him who has pledged his truth that he will take care of them; under the wings of his protection they are more secure than they could be in my care.”—Not small is the astonishment of the good people about here that my faith should thus have gained a trophy within the very shadows of the grave, for the woman described is very near her end, being in the last stage of a pulmonary consumption.

“My playful sister Charity, who is at my elbow, says, ‘tell Miss J— that I mean to come in a year or two and see what they

can do with *me* in her pretty valley; for being a rattle-brain, I have been given over as a child of the devil from my infancy, in-somuch that I feel something like a filial attachment for the old gentleman, and hope there will be a favorable turn in his hard fortune some day or other. However, I am willing to be quits with him after all, if there's a better chance for me; for, to say truth, I am tired of having certain pert and ignorant misses about here, roll their eyes and pucker up their faces as they meet me on the road to church, regarding me as infinitely their inferior, because they are pleased to term themselves *God's children*: but if God esteems them above me it is more than their neighbors do. Tell her, too,' she continues, 'that I am much obliged to her for making Alice a universalist; for she too is now a child of the devil, and is therefore nearer akin to me than formerly, since we can now both claim the same spiritual as well as natural father.'

"Adieu, my dear friend. May the light of this glorious faith extend to the farthest bounds of intellectual being—that wherever Jehovah is known at all, he may be known and felt as a GOD OF LOVE. So sincerely prays

ALICE SHERWOOD."

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The author feels it incumbent on him to assure the reader, that all the principal incidents in the above story are true. The valley itself has a real existence, and is faithfully described from his *memory* of the scene. Alice Sherwood and her two companions, the old Squire, Mrs. Mathews, Bridget Bounce, Mr. Waters, and the other *dramatis personæ* of the tale are true characters. He states this fact, in order that the story may not lose its proper effect, from the supposition that it is a mere figment of the imagination.

# PRO AND CON OF UNIVERSALISM.

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## PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS.

WE are about, reader, in a serious and candid spirit I hope, to examine together the claims and pretensions of universalism, pro and con: we wish to be honest in this business, do we not? I do, and am disposed to believe that you do also; well then, let us make a right beginning, since much depends on starting aright, and except we conduct our investigation according to some kind of system we can accomplish but little to advantage; under this persuasion I proceed to suggest some considerations, which in the task before us ought to be kept steadily in view.

1. You will admit that the scriptures cannot support two opposite doctrines *as true*, without destroying their own credibility; you will also admit that the contrary to what they do teach as true must be false; consequently, if *in a single instance* they sanction the notion that sin and misery will be of endless duration, it must follow that *Universalism is untrue*—for universalism asserts the contrary. Now if this doctrine stands contradicted by *one* text in the bible, we must not think of looking up other texts for the purpose of sustaining it—that *one* must be admitted as proving it *false*. See, reader, how I shorten business to your hand; you have now, in order to refute the doctrine of universal salvation, no need to furnish a *multitude* of texts, *one* will do—only bring one that is plainly to the purpose, and the work is accomplished. Do you fancy that the passage concerning the rich man and Lazarus is to your purpose? or that concerning the unparnonable sin? or those that relate to Christ's second coming? very well, we shall see in the course of this investigation, and if they are, or either of them, your doctrine is then established. You, of course, are willing to abide by this rule? So am I, and, remember, it works both ways equally; if I can find but *one* passage which clearly



proves that all misery and sin shall ultimately cease, it must follow that they cannot endure to all eternity—and then, reader, you are bound to become a universalist.

2. When a book is somewhat obscure in its style, a knowledge of the *author's character* will help to a proper understanding of it, and it is unfair so to interpret the matter written as that it will disagree with the known mind and dispositions of the writer. For example: Suppose, reader, that you should happen on a political work claiming to have been written by the venerated Washington, and several passages in it would bear the construction, that the author approved an *absolute monarchy* as the best form of government; would you not, from what you knew of the writer, at once reject such construction as unworthy of him, and as unlikely to be the correct one? Certainly you would; you would try if said passages would not fairly support a different sense—a sense corresponding with the principles which the Father of his country espoused at the risk of his fortune and life; and finding that they would, you would most readily adopt it as their true and proper meaning. Well, then, treat the bible in the same manner; read it as a revelation of the divine dispositions toward man; and, recollect, that if it be so, it will not contradict what nature and providence conspire to teach of his perfections; thus reading it, you will not, methinks, arise from its perusal in the belief that it sanctions the dogma of endless suffering.

3. The figurative part of the scriptures should not be made to support a sense plainly at variance with that of the literal part. If it is unequivocally taught in the bible, that all men shall be finally redeemed from unrighteousness and reconciled to their Creator, it is manifestly absurd to interpret certain parables and allegories as teaching the contrary. By a mistaken acceptance of the figurative language of scripture: Jehovah is supposed to be at times *angry*, *sorry*, and *grieved at heart*! he is thought to *hate* sinners; to *take vengeance* on them, to *laugh at their calamities*, &c! This is believed of the unchangeable *I am*! notwithstanding that these same scriptures distinctly inform us that *God is love*, *Good to all*; that he *changeth not*, *will not cast off forever*, *is kind to the unthankful and the evil*, *loving to every man*, and *will have all men to be saved*! By a particular observance of the foregoing rule, and by making the plain and obvious texts a

key to those which are obscure, these apparent contradictions would be avoided.

4. Some religious theories are so absurd in themselves—so at war with all our established notions of the fitness of things—that to suppose them supported by the bible, is to believe the bible itself unworthy of credit, as a book of mysteries, or rather absurdities, with which human reason can have no concern; and the theory of endless misery I conceive to be one of that very character. Many sensible minds have rejected the bible, because they had been taught by their religious tutors, that this dogma was therein inculcated. For, according to this theory, God either *designed* the most disastrous results from the work of creation, and is therefore a Being wholly devoid of benevolence; or these results will take place in *opposition* to his design, which must imply that he lacked the wisdom to foresee, or the power to prevent them, and is therefore short-sighted or impotent! “Shall I believe this, or discard the bible?” is the inquiry of many a mind; to which I answer, there is another, and better alternative. Cast off the influences of a false education; and bow to the simple teachings of inspiration, which are a fountain of divine truth wherein are mirrored the ineffable perfections of Jehovah; you will then find, methinks, that they are not chargeable with the lending their countenance to a doctrine, which involves a serious arraignment of all the divine attributes.

5. The scriptures must not be understood as authorizing a tenet, which by its very consequences is proved to be false; try that of endless misery by this rule, and it will be found, either that said dogma is unscriptural, or that the bible is in the highest degree self-contradictory; for allowing that it is taught in the inspired volume, we must then allow that it teaches the following incongruities—The *anger* of God which *is but for a moment*, will endure as long as his *mercy*, which *endureth forever*!—The works of the devil will exist after being *destroyed*, as long as Christ shall, who is to *destroy* them—“God will wipe away ALL tears from off ALL faces,” yet shall unnumbered intelligences weep to all eternity!—“The pleasure of the Lord will prosper in Christ’s hands,” nevertheless, the pleasure of the devil will so far prosper against it, that where *units* will be saved, *scores*, possibly *hundreds*, will be irretrievably ruined! “Christ shall

see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied," although his blood will have been shed in vain—his mission undertaken in vain—his benevolent desires exercised in vain, in regard to innumerable myriads whose redemption and recovery he undertook. The duration of the devil shall be co-eternal with that of him, who took flesh and blood, "that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil!" A large portion of that same world to which the bread of God from heaven "giveth life," shall, nevertheless, to all eternity continue under the empire of death! And although the Lamb of God "taketh away" its sin; it shall forever-more remain sinful! God "will not contend forever, neither" saith he, "will I be always wroth; for the spirits should fail before me, and the souls that I have made." "But he *will* contend, and be wrothful forever," saith the doctrine of endless misery, "without at all regarding the consequences to the souls that he has made." God's pleasure is "that all return unto him and live," and his truth is pledged that he will do ALL his pleasure, still, it will to ceaseless ages remain unaccomplished! His will is to "have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth;" but an immense majority of these *all men* will be endlessly damned and remain in ignorance! In the resurrection God is to abolish the *last* enemy—to subdue, or reconcile, all things unto himself; and to be *all in all*; but he will have many foes after the *last* is destroyed—millions shall continue in rebellion after *all* shall be reconciled; and they shall be estranged and alienated from him forever, notwithstanding he shall have become *all in all*. To sum up, this dogma represents that Jehovah will be disappointed; his purposes baffled; his pleasure unaccomplished; that Christ will have died in vain in regard to millions; and, therefore, that he was not equal to the undertaking upon which he entered; and in which an infinitely wise God saw fit to employ him; that the devil will prove too strong for his *destroyer* and *conqueror*; that Christ's victory over Death, will leave to the vanquished many more trophies than to the vanquisher; that the works of satan, who is finite, will co-endure with the works of God, who is infinite; sin shall exist as long as holiness; misery as long as happiness; death as long as life; error as long as truth; and hell, for the final overthrow and destruction of which the word of

Jehovah is pledged ; will be equal in its duration to heaven itself, which is the throne of God. And all this in despite of scriptural assurances to the contrary ; and despite also of the means which God has employed for the fulfilment of his purposes, in the gift of his Son, spirit, ministry, word, judgements &c !!! Who can believe all—and more than all this ? Can you, reader ? If not, then impute not to the bible the teaching of so absurd a system as that of which these are the consequences. If you *can* believe all this ; why, then, God help you, reader ! your credulity must be quite sufficient for the belief of any absurdities which it may suit your convenience to adopt, or the interests of priestly craft to inculcate.

6. It is admitted that if a doctrine be of bad practical tendency, however plausible in itself, the divine sanction must not be claimed for it. This is a sound rule, reader, and I am willing to abide by it, are you ? That the doctrine of endless suffering does not, on the whole, exert a beneficial influence upon mankind, is evident from reasoning *a priori*, and from facts. First from *reason*. This doctrine familiarizes the mind to scenes of horror and wretchedness more dreadful than words can portray, and must therefore harden the heart in the proportion in which it is believed ; for it is an established fact that the constant or frequent contemplation of suffering tends to blunt the sensibilities, and to generate cruelty. Hence where public executions are common, they are witnessed with indifference. Hence too, the butcher laughs while in the act of slaughtering a lamb—a sight at which those who are unaccustomed to it will weep ; and hence, I may further add, the most frightful denunciations of almighty wrath, are listened to with perfect unconcern, even by those who believe, that millions of the human family, including neighbors, friends, possibly immediate kindred, will to all eternity experience its dreadful weight. It is also true, that cruel laws serve to degrade and brutalize those who are subject to them ; hence in proportion to the sanguinary character of a government, are the barbarousness and viciousness of the governed ; and, on the other hand, a mild and free government will give birth to a virtuous and generous people. Now the doctrine of endless suffering represents the sovereign of the universe as a *tyrant*, who seeks to rule his subjects through their *fears*. “ Serve me or I will

burn you," is the language it puts into his mouth, "for your finite offences I will be infinitely angry, and for your disobedience of a moment, I will punish you with the pains of an eternity." Is it to be wondered at, that such a system has generated so much drivelling superstition?—so much morose and gloomy fanaticism? so many whining, cringing, abject, self-degrading sycophants; who lie at the feet of an almighty power, professing to adore its every act, however unintelligible the object—for the contemptible purpose of screening themselves from the weight of its apprehended wrath? Such, it must be conceded, have in all ages been the influences of this God-dishonoring tenet, and such, *a priori*, we should judge they would be. At the same time it is cheerfully admitted, that very many, by reason of their native excellency of disposition, have proved superior to these evil influences. These exceptions, however, do not affect the general truth of the rule.

Second, from *facts*. The world has experimented with the dogma of ceaseless woe for fifteen centuries. What has been the result? The founders and agents of the Inquisition in Spain, Portugal, and Portuguese-India believed in it; so did the relentless persecutors of the Waldenses and Albigenses; and the perpetrators of the St. Bartholomew massacre; wherein 40,000 were murdered in one day. And those also who lighted the fires of Smithfield. It was believed in, too, by Mahomet, who laid the foundation of his system in blood: and by his followers it was implicitly adopted, together with the principle that it is lawful to propagate religion by the sword. The worshipers of Juggernaut believe in it, and it lies at the bottom of all their degradations. And it is sacredly cherished by the Bedouins of the desert; with whom the *power* to plunder, constitutes the *right* to do so. What beneficial influence has the doctrine of endless misery exerted upon these? Scarcely a murderer expiates his crimes upon the gallows but he avows a belief in that dogma.\* And it has been ascertained that the inmates of our

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\* See for proof ninety and nine out of a hundred of the printed confessions of executed criminals. Such was the belief of Washburn, Hoover and Davis, recently executed in Cincinnati; and of Cowan, who butchered his wife and two children. An attempt was made in some religious party prints to deceive the public as to the opinions of the last named person; but unluckily for the publishers it was made too soon, i. e. before he was executed; and, therefore, there was opportunity for getting at the truth of the matter from his own lips. Being waited upon by several respectable citizens, and questioned as to his belief on this head, he stated that he had never en-

penitentiaries are nearly all of them the subjects of that faith.\* Surely if this dogma possessed the practical virtues which its advocates claim for it, we should not find a people vicious in proportion to the prevalency of its belief amongst them; but it is incontrovertible, that we *do* so find them, and therefore it has no such virtues.

7. "But in a matter of this sort," does the reader say? "it is a maxim of prudence to choose the *safe side*. Supposing it is; is it safer to *doubt* the divine goodness than to trust in it? Will God be angry with those who ascribe to him more benevolence than (according to your system) he actually possesses? And will he punish them for such an ascription? This hacknied *maxim of prudence*, has, after all, no prudence about it; we have no *right* nor *power* of choice in the matter of our belief—we are bound by conscience, and compelled by necessity to believe according to the decisions of evidence, and, so far as it respects our eternal state, one belief must be just as safe as another. The catholic is deterred from embracing protestant principles by the consideration, that though the latter may be *better*—i. e. more reasonable and scriptural—his own are more *safe*. "You *cannot* be saved out of my church if my faith is true," saith he, "whereas, by your own confession, I *can* be saved out of yours; *prudence* then cautions me to *choose the safe side*." The Jew, and the Mahomedan, use precisely the same argument, each considering salvation *sure* in his own church, and *uncertain* out of it; and its foundation in all cases is the weak supposition that a dependence on the divine mercy alone is insecure. "God *may* be as good as you say; but then he *may not*; and it is the more prudent course to prepare for the worst, that in any event we may be safe." Shame on such distrusts of the divine goodness! and on the systems of theology which tend to beget them!

8. We must be careful how we adopt mere arbitrary interpretations of scriptural terms and phrases, or we shall easily be

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tertaind doubts as to the truth of the notion of endless suffering; he had for fourteen years belonged to a church, which makes this an essential article of faith.

\* A few years since the newspaper vituperations against universalism, on the ground of its supposed vitiating tendencies, provoked an examination among the *state convicts* of Auburn and Sing Sing penitentiaries, in order to ascertain whether this system of religion had influenced *them* in their choice of a criminal course of life. The result of the investigation was, that not a single universalist was found in either of these establishments. The author of this work visited the prison at Auburn two years ago; this is in the heart of a country abounding with universalists, and yet among its 800 convicts *not one* believer in this doctrine was included!!

deceived as to the doctrines of the bible. For example; Walker defines the word *redemption*, "The purchase of God's favour by the death of Christ." Could anything be more absurd than the idea, that the infinite Being *sells* his favors? and sells them for the blood of suffering innocence?! The scriptures everywhere represent the grace of God as being *free*, or *gratuitous*; but *purchased* grace can scarcely be termed free. Webster gives us as the meaning of *damnation*, "A sentence to eternal torment;" and he even refers us for his authority to Mark xvi. 16. Now it happens that said passage is entirely silent about "eternal torment;" and that there is nothing in the connection which necessarily implies anything of the kind; consequently, both his definition and his reference are a sheer assumption. Three words in the original tongues, which are wide of each other in their signification, (I mean sheol, tartarus, and gehenna,) are represented in our common version by the one English word hell; and, until lately, it was not known that even this term has now a different signification from what it had formerly; insomuch, that Christ could be said to have "descended into hell." (See what is *miscalled* "the apostles creed,") without its being thereby meant that he went down to a region of torment, which is the idea now conveyed by the phrase. The English words eternal, everlasting, forever, etc. most commonly signify *endless duration*. The reader must bear it in mind that the scriptures were not originally written in English; the original terms which in our version these are made to represent, often to *misrepresent*, are not equivalent in their meaning, but require to be understood in each case according to the connection in which they stand; hence these terms cannot be relied on as sufficient, of themselves, to settle such questions concerning duration as may arise in the course of this investigation. But of these things in their proper place. For the present, the reader is only requested to bear in mind, that his religious education has led him to associate with every biblical term a particular idea, and that this association is often incorrect, having grown out of interpretations entirely arbitrary; and, therefore, that it is in such cases likely to lead him to wrong results in his inquiries into the meaning of the scriptures. He is requested as far as possible to guard against the influence of this circumstance; and, instead of leaning too much upon any authority aside from

the scriptures, to prefer making them in all possible cases the interpreters of themselves.

Lastly. Although it is freely confessed that mere human authority is insufficient for the settling of a question like the one before us, yet should it be found, that a doctrine now received as true, was not known by christians in the early ages of the church, the fact would warrant the conclusion, that said doctrine is not taught in the scriptures. What should we think of a politician who should set up certain principles as belonging to the Jeffersonian school in politics, and on enquiry it should be found, that none of the immediate successors of that statesman had ever held them? We should conclude with certainty that said politician was mistaken. In like manner, when a theologian starts a theory in religion, and we find it to have been unknown by those who immediately succeeded Christ and his apostles in the gospel ministry, we are compelled to conclude against the truth of said theory.

It must not, however, be inferred from the above, that the mere age of an opinion entitles it to respectful consideration; for the early converts to christianity from the Jewish and heathen churches, brought many strange whims with them, which they were fond of incorporating with their new faith: and the notion of a dark infernum, populated with doomed spirits, which is the basis of our present theory of hell, was, without doubt, one of said whims. Whilst, then, the entire *novelty* of a doctrine is proof presumptive of its untruth, the mere *antiquity* of a doctrine affords no presumption in its favor. That the belief of universal salvation is not a new thing in christendom is evident from ecclesiastical history. Origen, in the third century, a distinguished father in the church, maintained this opinion distinctly; and although several of his tenets were subsequently condemned as heretical, this was not included among them, which goes to show that even at that early time, this doctrine was not regarded as a novelty. The fact of its not being then considered a heresy is of great weight in its favor, for, unlike the doctrine of endless misery, it cannot be shown to have been derived from any system of heathen mythology: but, on the contrary, must be regarded as a tenet *peculiar* to christianity. Whereas the opposite doctrine, whilst it forms a part and parcel of most of the pagan codes of faith, was entirely unrecognized by the Jewish religion, which claims its origin from God himself.



Many other important considerations, reader, might be suggested here on the threshold of this investigation, serving to show how very small is the probability, that the dogma of ceaseless suffering can in the issue be regarded as of scriptural authority: but the above, it is believed, are quite sufficient for this purpose. Of this, however, you must be judge for yourself. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

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## UNIVERSAL SALVATION

### DIRECTLY AND POSITIVELY PROVEN FROM THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.

1. GOD IS LOVE.—(1 John, iv. 8.)—This proposition has been much declaimed upon, by those too, who, while they admitted its truth in *terms*, denied it in *fact*. It is now introduced as a subject for careful argumentation. In this business we shall not need those rhetorical embellishments which, at the same time that they amuse the fancy, often make it an instrument in deceiving the judgment: the less our argument is encumbered with these the better it will be, because the more intelligible.

As has been well remarked (by Adam Clarke) "God is never said, in the scriptures, to be Justice, or Patience, or Holiness, but he is frequently in one form or another said to be *love*." Hence it is inferred that love is his moral nature, and the basis of all his other attributes—love is God: to say that God is just, or holy, or unchanging, is the same as to say that infinite love is characterised by these qualities; to say that all creatures throughout all space are in God's hands, and subject to his control, is in effect to say they are in *love's* hands, and subject to *its* control: in short, God and love are so essentially identical, that the name of each may be, and often is, employed for designating the other; any predicate of the one will answer equally well as a predicate of the other; hence we may affirm of infinite love that it rules the universe, is eternal, impartial, holy, just, good, &c., for God is all these, and God *is* love. In these three words is he defined

by John, a fisherman of Galilee, and they express more than all the collected wisdom of previous and subsequent ages ever has or can express.

The doctrine of endless misery is utterly irreconcilable with this essential attribute of the deity, for love invariably seeks, and to the utmost of its power promotes the ultimate good of its objects; by this circumstance alone is it distinguishable from its opposite principle; to affirm that love will consent that any of its objects shall be miserable, without reference to any *eventual good from that misery*, is to affirm that it approves of misery *for its own sake*, and this is to confound it with hatred. The doctrine of endless woe does in effect affirm this, and thereby it absurdly confounds Jehovah, who is infinite love, with infinite hatred. To make this more plain, we will suppose God to be the opposite of what he is—What should we expect as the result? Anything worse than what is contemplated in the belief of unceasing torment? If not, in affirming this doctrine, are we not manifestly confounding love with hatred, since we ascribe to the one such actions as can only result from the other?

Wherever infinite love is, there can no suffering be, except permitted from motives of ultimate benefit to the sufferer, and consequently, in no conceivable case can the theory of endless misery be verified, except by some means the subject thereof could get beyond the presence of love, or, which is the same thing, beyond the presence of God. But,

2. GOD IS OMNIPRESENT.—(Psl. cxxxix. 7).—And, of course, love is omnipresent; it surrounds, pervades, and sustains all things, (Ephe. iv. 6,) to get beyond its reach, therefore, is impossible, for whither shall we go from its presence? Shall we ascend to the heaven of heavens? it is there. Shall we descend to depths unfathomable by the plummet-line of thought? it will still be far, far beneath us: and should we speed with the wings of light to the farthest bounds of being, still, still should we find its presence to extend immeasurably beyond us. The sinner is in its hands when he goes hence equally as while he is here, and although he may find it “a fearful thing to fall into the hands of God,” yet the result will prove that they are the hands of *love*, and, therefore, not the hands of an enemy. Such was David’s view of the matter, when reduced to the necessity of selecting

one out of three modes of punishment. "Let me fall now," said he, "into the hands of the Lord, *for very great are his mercies*; but let me not fall into the hands of man." (1 Chro. xii. 13.) But why prefer falling into God's hands, rather than those of man, if, as the dogma of eternal torment affirms, God's inflictions will infinitely exceed in duration and severity any which the most cruel of mankind would be willing to sanction?

The power of Jéhovah cannot extend where his love does not, for that would prove the latter finite, and if his power cannot extend beyond his love, it can act on creatures only as directed by love; it can inflict only such suffering as love approves as conducive to its own ends: hence it may with confidence be affirmed that even *present* suffering would not be permitted except with reference to some future benefit to the sufferer, and, consequently, that no *useless* suffering exists, for if divine love will overrule it all for ultimate good it is not useless. The scriptures abundantly sustain this view of the matter. "For the Lord," say they, "will not cast off for ever, for though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies, for he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men." (Lam. iii. 37. See also, Heb. xii. 10.) Of course endless misery is entirely excluded by this reasoning, for misery without end can produce no beneficial results to the sufferer, and if no beneficial results to the sufferer, then infinite love can have no agency in its infliction; and if infinite love would refuse to sanction it, then it must take place, if at all, where love is not, but it cannot take place where love is not, for love is everywhere.

If unending misery be inflicted, will it not, as it regards the subjects, consist of an exercise of *power* to the exclusion of *love*? and will there not in that case be creatures whom God will not love? and since he will not love them, can he be a God to them, inasmuch as there can be no *God* where there is no *love*, for *God is love*? It is impossible for answers consisting with the faith of endless misery to be rendered to these questions. If in the vast, vast solitudes of space, there existed a point beyond which the divine presence did not extend, and beings were capable of hurling themselves into this desolate void, (for desolate it must needs be without a God) they doubtless could thus be rendered miserable without end, and thus only, as has already been said, there is

no other way conceivable; but the supposition implies an impossibility, Jehovah being omnipresent.

3. GOD IS OMNISCIENT.—(Acts xv. 18.)—He knew from eternity all we should ever be; he foresaw every mutation through which we should ever pass; every sinful act we should commit. If there could ever arise any circumstance to affect his regards for us, he as certainly knew it before he created us as now; the fact must have been as much a cause for wrath or hatred toward us then as after it transpired; nevertheless, in full view of all which it was foreseen we should be he loved us, and that too “with a great love:” (Ephes. ii. 4.) Now if God were defective in this attribute of his character, the notion of endless misery would find some sort of shelter in the plea, that as Jehovah failed to foresee that so disastrous a case would arise, he did not provide against it, and, therefore, that the evil is now past remedy, and God would fain prevent it if he could. But no such plea can be set up, for not alone in sound philosophy, but in the scriptures, he is represented as “seeing the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done.” (Isaiah xlii. 10.) Futurity, which to all other eyes, lies in impenetrable shadow, is perfectly open and clear to his; he knoweth all its, as yet, undeveloped and unrecorded events. And how could it be otherwise? for

“Did he o’erlook the least of his concerns,  
(Since from the least the greatest oft originate),  
Then unforeseen contingency might alarm him,  
And disturb the smooth and equal course of his  
Affairs.”

It is worse than idle, then, to resort to the ridiculous subterfuge of saying, that God *does not* foreknow all things! but *could* know them were he so minded!—which fantasm has been sanctioned by no less a personage than Dr. Adam Clarke! A blunder, this, (by the way,) which may be pardoned in a son of Erin, but in no other, for it implies that God *must* know all things, in order to determine how many and which among them he may choose to know, and how many and which of them he may choose to be ignorant of! I have shown, I think, that God’s foreknowledge comprised all events, and that in view of all which it was foreseen we should be he loved us. If, then, his love shall always con-

tinue, it will surely not consent to our being plunged into sufferings which can yield us no benefit; and if his love shall not always continue, he must necessarily undergo a change.—But

4. GOD IS UNCHANGEABLE.—(James iii. 2.)—And even were he otherwise, it would be impossible to find a cause which could justify a change in him toward us, because nothing in relation to us has transpired of which he was not fully aware long before we had a being. Arminians are apt to tell us in this argument, that although the love wherewith God once loved the sinner shall eventually change to hatred, yet God changeth not! The change, say they, is altogether in the sinner! which, to my thinking, is very singular logic. God hates to-day the very beings whom he loved yesterday, and yet remains unchanged!! Then surely love and hatred are one and the same thing! “But,” say they again, “he loved us as pure beings, and on our becoming sinners he ceased to love us.” Well, supposing this the case, does he undergo no change in ceasing to love us? How absurd the negative to this question. But it is contrary to fact that God loved us as pure beings—he never knew us as such; it is flatly contrary to scripture likewise, for “God commended his love toward us in that *while we were yet sinners* Christ died for us.” (Rom. v. 16.) “*When we were enemies*, we were reconciled to God by the death of his son.” (Ibid. ver. 10.) And hence another inspired writer observes, “Herein was love, not that we loved God, but that God loved us.” (1 John iv. 10.) Now do we not seriously detract from the divine character, when we represent that his love toward us will abate, merely because we prove to be just such beings as he clearly foresaw we would be when that love was first conceived, supposing it to have had a beginning? For nothing surely but a change from love to hatred can induce his consent, that an existence which he conferred as a blessing, shall by any possibility be converted to a curse.

The Arminian will here shift his ground, and argue as follows. “God eternally hates sin; when we become sinners, we associate ourselves with what he eternally hates, and therefore his hatred of us implies no change on his part but on ours.” Now know you not, sir, that this is a mere sophism? For in associating ourselves *with* sin we do not *become* sin, and therefore do not become the thing which God eternally hates. If you could show

that God eternally hates *sinners*, it would be much more to your purpose. And think you, sir, that Jehovah will subject to an indiscriminate destruction both that which he loves and that which he hates? that he will never dissociate them? It were equally wise in the farmer to destroy both his wheat and its adherent chaff, merely because he found them together in his field! Or for the lapidary to destroy his precious stones, because of the worthless earths in which he may have found them embedded!

Either God once loved the sinner, or he did not. If he did *not*, then he created him in hatred, and it is vain to look to the life or character of the sinner for the ground of that hatred, as it took place millions of ages before he was in being! If God *did* once love the sinner, he loves him yet—he ever will—or he is a finite Being, and affected by finite objects; but, the scriptures being true, this cannot be, “for he is of one mind and none can turn him.” (Job xxiii. 13.) God must, therefore, to all eternity love all intelligences; this love will not prevent their being subjected to just punishment, for punishment aims at a good result; but it will certainly prevent their being *ruined*; for the ruin of its object is only consistent with hatred.

It is the very perfection of absurdity to suppose that the dispositions of an infinite Being are in anywise affected by the mutations of his frail and short-sighted creatures; this our opponents must and do admit, and yet they are continually giving to some obscure scripture texts such an interpretation as makes them teach directly the contrary. For instance, the passage in the first chapter of Proverbs, where Wisdom, personified in the feminine gender, is represented as saying, “Because I have called and ye refused, I have stretched out my hands and NO man regarded; I also will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh,” &c. Which text is usually subjected to the horrid comment, that the Almighty God will laugh, and sport himself with the miseries of his infinitely ruined offspring! But in their blind zeal to make out a case our opponents seem to overlook the fact, that, thus interpreted, the passage goes quite beyond their purpose—it proves too much, as it includes themselves, with all mankind besides, in a doom of final reprobation—“NO man regarded;” and therefore ALL men must be endlessly damned! A sweeping conclusion, truly.

The mutability of God is manifestly implied in the common supposition, that although he will bear with the provocations of sinners during the term of their stay on earth, yet so soon as they are removed hence, he will utterly alter his course, and let loose his vengeance upon them without mercy. Some have even supposed that there is a period in the *lifetime* of each individual, beyond which the divine forbearance will no longer be exercised toward him; if he remains impenitent up to that juncture, he is said to have "sinned away his day of grace;" his fate is then sealed. To such an one will apply the language of Abdiel, addressed to the chief fallen spirit, in "*Paradise Lost*."

———"those indulgent laws will not be now vouchsafed,  
Other decrees against thee are gone forth without recall.  
That golden scepter which thou didst reject, is now  
An iron rod to bruise and break thy disobedience."

How hapless the lot of such! For they have learned by bitter experience that the divine mercy is as variable as their own purposes! The number, however, is comparatively small, who think that life's flickering taper will in some cases outburn the sun of divine mercy; much the most of christians are of the opinion of the poet, that,

"Whilst the lamp holds out to burn  
The vilest sinner may return."

But the philosophy is weak, and the theology false in either case; for how in the name of both can God's dispositions toward his creatures be affected by their removal from one department of his works to another? Can such removal change the relations between the parties? Is God not the same Being in all places? Take, for example, the case of Paul. Suppose that on his way to Damascus, when the vision came upon him, he had broken his neck in falling to the ground; he would then have died an unconverted persecutor of the christian religion. What then? Why then, according to popular theology, he would have been an object of divine wrath to all eternity! But, luckily for him, his neck escaped, and a few minutes witnessed his moral transformation into a chosen vessel of mercy! What a hair-breadth partition betwixt bliss and woe eternal! How unstable the divine regards toward his creatures! and how feeble the chances on which they turn! "I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." (Mal. iii. 6.) For the same reason, I desire no better; the dogma of interminable misery must be false.

5. GOD IS OMNIPOTENT.—(Rev. xix. 5.)—Whatsoever, therefore, his wisdom prompts him to purpose, his power enables him to execute. By Calvinists this truth is fully admitted, but they contend, that God only *purposed* the salvation of a *part* of mankind, and that that part must eventually be gathered in, “for,” say they, “God has all power, and will not fail to do his pleasure.” They seem anxious to vindicate the divine *wisdom* and *power*, but it is at the expense of his *goodness* and *equity*. Arminians, on the other hand, seem shocked at this limitation of the divine benevolence, and contend that God is impartial, and earnestly desires to have all men saved, but from some cause or other will be disappointed! They seem anxious to vindicate the divine *goodness* and *equity*, but it is at the expense of his *wisdom* and *power*! The Calvinistic deity is an all-wise, and all-powerful Being; but *partial*, and *inexorable*, who works for his own *mere pleasure*, uncaring how much misery that pleasure may cost his creatures! His *own glory* is his continual aim—for this he raises up or casts down—gives life or death—he saves or damns. His glory must reign, though the throne of its sovereignty be erected on pyramids of damned spirits! The Arminian God, on the contrary, is a kind-hearted, well-meaning Being, but deplorably deficient in *prudence* and *foresight*, he is rather to be pitied than blamed when the creatures he formed for himself are wrested from him by the devil, and lured into irrecoverable ruin, for he certainly made them for a different end! He is rather to be pitied than blamed I say, yet, in truth, he is scarcely excusable in having created beings, of whom he knew himself unable to take the necessary care! and that by far the larger part of them should—despite his utmost efforts to the contrary—become a prey to his malignant enemy the devil. Reader, can you in conscience say that I am unfair in these representations? Universalists worship a deity “who will have all men to be saved,” (1. Tim. ii. 6.) and who “worketh all things after the council of his own will,” (Eph. i. 2.) whose pleasure it is that all should “turn from their evil way and live,” (Eze. xxxii. 11.) and who “will do all his pleasure,” (Isa. xlvi. 10.) God has certainly not given to his creatures an ability to counteract his infinite purposes! On the contrary, “He doeth his will, in the armies of heaven, and amongst the inhabitants of the earth, and



none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what doest thou?" (Dan. iv. 35.)

It is pretended, that "none are doomed to final ruin, till God has previously done every thing for their salvation, which, consistently with his attributes, he can do; and that, therefore, the endless misery of the damned involves no reflection on the divine goodness." Supposing this true, does it involve no reflection on his goodness to have called them into being, under circumstances which rendered their endless misery certain? But it is *not* true; the weight of Christ's authority stands against it; he testifies that God did much more for Chorazin, and Bethsaida, than he had done for Tyre, and Sidon; and that had he done as much for the latter places, "they would long ago have repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes," (Mat. xi. 20.) And addressing Capernaum, he says, "If the mighty works which are done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained unto this day," (ibid.) Now it certainly must be considered a singular fact, that God desires the salvation of all, and yet permits thousands to sink to endless woe, who could have been saved by his doing merely as much for them, as he saw fit to do for others! How is this? Universalists maintain, that God's love is as strong beyond, as on this side the grave; and that what it fails of accomplishing here, it will infallibly accomplish hereafter; at least, the ultimate salvation of all men cannot fail from a lack of divine power; if at all it must be from a lack of his goodness. But

6. GOD IS GOOD.—(Psa. lxxxvi. 5.)—Goodness is opposed to evil, it seeks to overcome it, hence the injunction, "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good," (Rom. xii. 27.) This, undoubtedly, is according to the divine conduct, for God would certainly not enjoin on his creatures a virtue which he will not practice himself; and if the divine goodness shall eventually overcome our evil, then the existence of evil must forever cease; and, by consequence, the existence of misery also. "The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercy is over all his works," (Psl. cxlv. 9.) But how God can be good to *all*, and yet torment countless millions without any regard to their good, is more than can be comprehended! How his tender mercy can be over *all his works*, and yet a large portion of those works be abandoned to infinite ruin, is also more than can be comprehended! Indeed,

there are many things in the scriptures which we must not pretend to understand in accordance with the notion of endless misery, inasmuch as they are utterly repugnant to that doctrine. If the mercy of God *does* extend to the damned, without alleviating their miseries, or eventually bringing them to a salutary termination, then there is no difference between *mercy* and *cruelty*—it is as well to be the object of the one as of the other—since they both produce the same effects. For how can cruelty be better defined than by saying, *it is the infliction of torment on an object, without designing any good to that object from that torment?* and if infinite mercy will do this, then it is not distinguishable from infinite cruelty. If, on the other hand, the mercy of God *does not* extend to the damned, then it is not “over all his works,” neither is it infinite, which signifies without bounds or limits.

To me it seems that the question of endless misery can be settled in few words, as follows—The unhappy subjects of endless damnation, is their existence, so far as respects themselves, a good? or an evil? You will not hesitate to answer, *an evil*. I again ask, Can an absolute evil emanate from a Being who is infinitely good? NO, is the only answer of which this question will fairly admit, and it answers equally well the question, whether the dogma of unceasing suffering can possibly, in this view of the case, be true?

7. GOD IS JUST.—(Deut. xxxii. 4.)—We are brought into existence by the mere will of our creator; we are compelled to accept of that existence on his own terms, *our will* is not consulted in the matter; if the terms on which we receive our being are as dreadful as represented by the doctrine of endless misery, it seems but just that we should be voluntary parties in the compact; but such we are not, and, therefore, cannot justly be held to the terms.

A powerful nobleman settles by deed of conveyance a small farm upon one of his tenants; while the latter is rejoicing in his newly acquired property, he is informed, that the conditions of the gift are, that not a single weed must be allowed to grow upon the premises; that if, at any moment when it may suit the donor to call him to account, there shall be found any such within the limits of the farm, he shall answer for it with his life, and be put

to death in the most horrid manner. The poor man in great alarm hastens to inform the nobleman that he cannot accept of the property on such fearful terms; but he is told in reply that it is now too late; the compact is settled, and sealed, and cannot be cancelled. "Whether you were acquainted with the conditions or not—whether a party in the bargain or not—it is *my will* that the matter should be as it is, and you must abide the issue." Reader, is the conduct of that nobleman *just*?

Justice requires, that when an article of value is entrusted to any one's keeping, he should be clearly apprised of its full worth, and the consequences of its loss, and should be provided with means of security in proportion. Now conceive man charged with the keeping of an immortal spirit, and that his sins during this brief existence, will subject it through unending duration to the dreadful heritage of its almighty maker's frowns. I ask, if man is so clearly apprised of his situation as the magnitude of the matter at stake requires he should be? I ask further, are his means of security in proportion to the inconceivably dreadful issue of the cast? On the contrary, if the system which supposes this state of things be true, myriads of invisible spirits are constantly seeking opportunities to deceive and ruin him, and his own depraved nature—with which he is born without his own consent—is ever ready to second their malignant efforts! In addition, the way of safety is so dim and uncertain, that a thousand different paths are sincerely mistaken for it, and by no possibility can it certainly be determined, that any one is right to the exclusion of all the rest! There are innumerable wants and anxieties to which man is unavoidably subject, and which tend to divert his mind from the business of his soul's salvation! Surely they must deem but meanly of the justice of heaven, who imagine that he thus trifles with the eternal interests of his creatures!

Justice also requires, that there should be an equal proportion between crime and punishment; and who will pretend that such proportion exists betwixt the crimes of even the most abandoned of our race, and the ceaseless sufferings of eternity? sufferings which shall inconceivably long endure, when as many millions of ages shall have passed away, as there are stars in the firmament of night—multiplied by as many more as there are

particles of light in the sun—and these by as many as there are atoms of matter in the universe—and the whole together by as many as the moments of duration which have elapsed, since the almighty put forth the first exertion of his omnipotence! Must it not be admitted, that in damning to all eternity one immortal spirit, God would inflict a greater evil, than all the sins of all mankind, from the commencement till the close of time, ever have or ever can accomplish? With what justice then can endless misery be inflicted?

I may be told that “the sin of man is *infinite*, and, therefore, deserving of infinite punishment.” But the notion of the infinity of sin destroys all idea of proportion between one sin and another, and, consequently, the slightest idle word is equal to “the blasphemy against the holy ghost.” Besides this notion proves one sin to be infinite, and, therefore, a million of sins is a million of infinities! and if one deserve infinite punishment, how can a million ever be justly punished? There is no end to the absurd consequences deducible from this position.

Sin is a voluntary violation of the divine requirements, “To him that *knoweth* to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin,” (Jam. iv. 17.) Does God exact infinite performances of finite creatures? If so, he requires of us as much as he can do himself! and if not, sin is a violation of but finite obligations, and is consequently but finite in itself, and in proportion to the amount he commits will be the quantity of the sinner’s punishment.

We set up no claim to *eternal life* on the ground of justice, we would not be understood as demanding this as a matter of right, we hope for it as “the gift of God, through Jesus Christ.” But we *do claim in justice* to be returned to our original unconscioness, except it shall please God to prolong our existence for objects of benevolence; we do too firmly rely upon his justice to believe, that he would obtrude on us a being by which he knew we should be infinitely the losers! and we conceive, therefore, that we have a large interest in this attribute of his character. God is too just to be unmerciful, as well as too merciful to be unjust; there is the utmost harmony between these perfections of his nature. God is not divided against himself, and as the unending misery of millions of mankind, cannot be agreeable to his *mercy*, it cannot for the same reason be agreeable to his *justice*.

Would it be just in God to subject the sinner to the necessity of remaining unjust to all eternity? Does justice, in requital for a temporary violation of its requirements, demand that those requirements should continue eternally to be violated? The doctrine of endless misery certainly involves an affirmative answer to these questions!

8. GOD IS HOLY.—(Lev. xix. 2.)—From the opposition between this principle and sin, we argue that the latter must eventually be brought to a period; which, to be sure, is a very different idea from that which is commonly entertained, viz. that God, who is a being of infinite purity, will cause sin, or at least permit it, to co-endure with his own eternity! If sin shall always exist, it will be owing either to a want of *power* in God to destroy it, or to a want of *disposition*. To the former it cannot be, for he is almighty; neither can it be to the latter, for it is a thousand times declared in his word, in one form or other, that sin is utterly odious to him. How then can it be supposed, that he will doom those who die unholy, eternally to remain so?

Either, 1st,—Sin, and the divine holiness, shall exist in eternal opposition to each other—or 2ndly, they shall exist in eternal union—or, 3dly, the greater of the two shall eventually overcome, and destroy the other. If the 1st is true, the parties must be equal, and so neither of them can be infinite! If the 2nd is true, all that the scriptures and moral philosophy teach respecting the deity, must be false! We must therefore conclude the 3rd to be true; And now, which shall prevail, infinite purity, or sin? If the former, the whole universe shall be reconciled to God, and be happy. If the latter, the whole universe shall be subjected to the devil, and be miserable. Can common sense be at a loss for a decision in this case? The scriptures, at least, have not left the matter in doubt, “For it pleased the Father, that in him all fulness should dwell, and (having made peace by the blood of the cross) by him to *reconcile all things unto himself*; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.” (Col. i. 20.) According to very respectable commentators, “things in earth, and things in heaven,” is a common Hebrew phrase for expressing the *whole intelligent universe*.

An objector may here inquire, “Why, since it is so opposed to his nature, does not God exterminate sin at once? and, since

he does not at once, how do we know that he ever will? To the first question I reply, that sin, though odious *in itself*, may yet, as overruled by the divine Being, be made to eventuate in a greater good than could be effected without its means. I say not that God *appointed* it to that end; but that he will so overrule it that such shall be the result. How otherwise, can his permitting its existence be vindicated? for it could surely not have existed without his permission. "The wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain," (Psa. lxxvi. 10.) None will deny that there are numerous instances on sacred record of sin having been made to minister to good results. The betrayal and crucifixion of Jesus Christ are examples to this point. To the 2nd question I answer, that the scriptures afford us the clearest guarantee that all evil shall come to a close; it is supposed to be the work of the devil, i. e. *an adversary*, and "for this purpose the son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil," (1 John, iii. 10.) Of course, we are not warranted in supposing that these same works of the devil will continue in being after they are destroyed, as long as he shall who is to destroy them; and if sin shall cease, so also shall suffering.

Much is said by objectors of shallow intellect, on the absurdity of supposing, that *sinners* can enjoy happiness in the immediate presence of a holy God. "The pure abodes of bliss," they say, "would afford no felicity to sinners." This objection rests on the assumption that universalists hold to all men being saved *in their sins*, which is not the fact, and the objection is therefore inapplicable; if it have any force at all, it is equally against the objectors, for, are they not sinners? If not, they are not of the class which Christ came to save, for he "came into the world to save sinners," yea the "chief," (1 Tim. i. 15.) Grace shall abound where sin hath abounded, and by as much more as infinite goodness exceeds finite evil; God requires us to be holy, as he is holy, and has declared that without holiness no man can see him; yet has he given us in his word the counter assurance, that his "glory shall be revealed, and *all flesh* shall see it together," (Isaiah, xl. 4.) which implies of course, that all shall have attained to the prerequisite holiness, which is the term of admission to his blissful presence.

9. GOD IS TRUE.—(2. Cor. i. 18.)—And man is to “live by every word that proceedeth out of his mouth.” (Mat. iv. 4.) For his words are words of love, (God is love,) and are dispensed to minister moral life to man; hence the gospel is called “the word of his *grace*,” (Acts xx. 32.) and “the word of *life*.” (Acts v. 20.) It is also identified with a message of *salvation*, (Acts xiii. 26.) and with a message of *peace*. (Acts x. 36.) The burden of its communication is, that “eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.” (Titus i. 2.) And being promised before the world began, it was not made dependant on anything in us, or to be performed by us, but on the divine verity. “For he is faithful that promised.” (Heb. x. 23.) Our unbelief can never induce Jehovah to violate his word. “If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful, he cannot deny himself.” (2. Tim. ii. 13.) Man’s purposes and promises are necessarily affected by unforeseen contingents, but when Jehovah gives his word no circumstance can prevent its being made good. “For as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it.” (Isa. lv. 9.) God’s truth is even pledged upon *oath* for man’s salvation. (Isa. xlv. 23.) The reason for its being so confirmed, is thus explained by the apostle, “For men verily swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife; wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge, to lay hold of the hope set before us.” (Heb. vi. 16.) After all which, Arminianism makes the whole matter to depend on some *ifs*, *buts*, *excepts*, *provided*s, &c. And these subjunctives can never be made positives by our own agency, but by the direct agency of Jehovah alone—when, and in regard to whom, he shall see fit to exert it! What assurance then can we individually have for ourselves after all?

There are in the scriptures, unquestionably, some conditional

promises; these all, however, respect our situation in *time*, and in no case extend their reference to eternity. Salvation, through faith, takes place during the *present* existence of the believer. "He that believeth on me HATH everlasting life." (John iii. 36.) And damnation, through unbelief, takes place during the *present* existence of the unbeliever. "He that believeth not IS condemned already." (John iii. 18.) The promises which respect man's condition beyond death are *absolute*—as already said, they rest on no contingents; they are called "exceeding great and precious." (2 Pet. i. 4.) And the covenant containing them, as compared with the Jewish covenant of works, is called "a better covenant, founded upon better promises." (Heb. viii. 6.) These are not conditional, for the promises of God through Christ are not "yea and nay;" they are not *may be* and *may not be*; but "in him all the promises of God are yea, and in him amen, to the glory of God by us." (2 Cor. i. 21.) "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord." [The fault found with the old covenant, it seems from this text, was its *conditionality*, which rendered its blessings very insecure, having only the frail dependance of human faithfulness.] "But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." [If it be considered a term in this promise, that the subjects are to have God's laws in their minds, is not God pledged to put them there? If they are required to be God's people, is he not bound by covenant to make them such? As, then, the conditions depend on God for fulfilment, they cannot ultimately fail in regard to any of the subjects, as is manifest from what follows:] "And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, know the Lord, for ALL shall know me from the least unto the greatest, for I will be merciful to their unrighteousness; and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." (Heb. viii. 8—12.) A promise could not be more absolute in its character, and of this



our opponents seem well aware; hence they seem anxious to limit its application to believers. "The house of Israel," say they, "spiritually means the church." And does "the house of Judah" also mean the church? and was it the "fathers" of the church which "continued not in" God's covenant, and were therefore not "regarded?" What trifling with the sacred oracles is this! And now, I beg to know, if God will unconditionally save the Jewish nation, will he not save all the nations on the same grounds? or is he a respecter of nations?

The very key-stone of the gospel arch seems to be the promise made by God to Abraham, that in his seed all mankind shall be blessed; this is frequently adverted to in the new testament, in such terms as sufficiently show the great importance the inspired writers attached to it; Paul emphatically calls it *the gospel*, (Gal. iii. 8.) and Peter, with equal emphasis, calls it *the promise*, (Acts. ii. 39.) and *the covenant made with the fathers*, (ibid. iii. 25.) It is indeed a promise of promises: its manifest import is, that all nations, families, kindreds, to whom have extended the curse of sin and its concomitant moral death, shall experience a redemption therefrom, and be blessed with Christ Jesus their head. The revelation of this great truth is "glad tidings of great joy which *shall be* unto all people," (Luke ii. 10.) It was the prime theme of preaching in the infancy of christianity, and it caused the hearts of those that heard it to bound with gladness. To doubt the eventual fulfilment of this promise is to make God a liar, (1 John v. 10.) it is to refuse credence to the record which he giveth of his son, "and this is the record, that God *hath given* unto us eternal life, and this life is in his son," (ibid.) hence he is said in the scripture to have given his son "to be the life of the world," (viii. 24.) and Jesus calls himself "the bread of God which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life to the world." (John vi. 33.) The primitive believers rested in hope of that eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began, (Titus ii. 2.) and this promise was not hypothetical, or conditional, but absolute, "not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which were given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." (2 Tim. i. 9.) Could *unconditionality* be more strongly expressed?

It may be objected, that this record is true only with regard to

the believer; but if so, how does the unbeliever by refusing credence to it make God a liar? for he only treats as false that which (according to the objection) *actually is so* as it respects himself! It is then a clear case that our belief or unbelief cannot affect the truth of the record; it was a verity from everlasting, and to everlasting it must remain a verity; and we are required to believe it, not to *make it true*, but *because it is so*; so soon as this record is believed, its reality is verified, hence the believer is said to have "passed from death unto life," (John. v. 24.) he "*hath* everlasting life," (ibid. iii. 36.) it was his before he realized it; the gift of God made it his, and the truth of God declared it his, and faith in the record at length brought him into possession of it.

But some will here inquire, Suppose the unbeliever should to all eternity treat the record as false, will he not in that case fail ever to experience its verity? The supposition implies a contradiction, for if by any means an individual shall fail to enjoy the blessing communicated in the gospel, it will prove as it respects that individual a falsehood, and if a falsehood, his unbelief in it can be no crime, but rather a virtue.

Some of the subjects of a certain wise and benevolent king, having been informed that he is a tyrant, rebel against his government, but being weak, and unable to resist his power, they are soon brought to experience that they lie entirely at his mercy; they are now filled with the most dreadful apprehensions; they imagine that he will execute his vengeance upon them in every horrid form; some he will burn alive, others he will break upon the wheel, &c. Poor creatures! they have greatly mistaken the character of their king, for he has no such cruel intentions. On the contrary he resolves to subdue them by the force of love; to overcome their evil with his goodness; he accordingly writes an act of pardon in their behalf, and sets the royal signature to it, at the same time commissioning an ambassador to carry them the joyous intelligence. But suppose that some of them will refuse to credit the message, what then? Will he falsify his word? will he prove himself vindictive because they in their blindness suppose him so? That would be a strange method, surely, of vindicating his character and the truths of his message! Yet, thus acting, he would but imitate the

conduct which the doctrine of endless misery ascribes to the sovereign of the universe.

Or, to change the figure, a certain wealthy man, hearing that a poor debtor of his is in great distress, from an apprehension that his little all is about to be seized to satisfy the claim against him, sends a written assurance to his poor friend that he has forgiven him the whole debt, and professing in strong terms his kind dispositions towards him : the debtor, however, refuses to credit these benevolent assurances, as they disagree with the ideas he has received of his creditor's character : whereupon the other gets angry, prosecutes the debt, and in default of payment casts the poor man into prison. Does not the conduct of the creditor in this case justify the poor man's unbelief in his kind professions ? It undeniably does ; it proves that the other would have been unsafe in relying upon any promises of his.

To apply these cases. Will God act cruelly because we think him cruel ? Will his *truth* become a *falsehood* because we treat it as such ? Will he belie his own record, by eternally damning those to whom he *hath given* eternal life ? And will he do this because we foolishly refuse credence to that record ? A most sagacious method of vindicating its verity, unquestionably.

Thus we have seen that every attribute of Jehovah yields conclusions, the most clear and undoubted, in favour of the eventual salvation of all mankind. How could a suspicion to the contrary be entertained for a single moment ? seeing that God is one and undivided, and all the perfections of his nature are in harmony with each other. His *justice* is as much opposed to the endless reign of *injustice* as is his *holiness* to the ceaseless duration of *sin*, or his *love* to the eternal continuance of *hatred*, or his *mercy* to that of *cruelty* ; his *goodness* to that of *evil*, and his *truth* to that of *error*. It is in the nature of things for these infinite attributes to overcome their opposites ; the latter being finite, and not allowed even a present existence *for their own sake* ; but with reference to some ultimate good to be brought about by their means. How ought we to rejoice and take courage from the fact, that our heavenly father's character is pledged for our final good ! And how valuable ought we to esteem that revelation of himself to the world through Jesus Christ, by means of which we arrive at this glorious assurance ! What a soothing and

peaceful influence does this assurance breathe through the soul !  
Amid the darkness and dreariness of life, its language is,

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“yet bear up awhile,  
And what thy bounded view (which only saw  
A little part) deem'd evil, is no more,  
The storms of wintry time will quickly pass,  
And one unbounded spring encircle all.”

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## THOUGHTS ON THE LAW OF GOD.

This subject is so apt to be introduced in controversies of this nature, that I have thought proper to consider it at some length, and to assign it a distinct place in this investigation : especially as the opponents of universalism, when compelled by arguments from the attributes of God to abandon the hope of finding countenance to their theory in that quarter, are prone to have recourse to his *law*, and to make *it* responsible for the severity of the sinner's doom, as if the law could exist independently of the legislator ! “ God, to be sure,” say they, “ is infinitely good, and no wise disposed in and of himself to inflict upon his creatures so horrible a punishment, but his *law* imperiously requires such a satisfaction upon its violators, and except its demands are met to the full, the order and harmony of the divine government cannot be maintained.” Never did a bad cause resort to a weaker fallacy. “ Is there a fate above the Gods ?” Or, to christianize the question, is there a law in the government of Jehovah which he himself cannot control ? and in contrariety to his purpose and pleasure will the destinies of millions of millions be fixed by this uncontrollable power in irreversible perdition ? Then indeed is the creator to be pitied : since none more than he will deplore—and unavailingly deplore—the ruin brought upon his creatures by this relentless law ! Yet, even in this view of the case, he is not wholly exonerated from blame for having created beings in view of this result ; and him, therefore, after all, and not his law, must they hold as primarily responsible for their miseries.

Theological system-builders tell us that the law of God is infinite. Why ? Because it is *God's* law. All things are God's. Are all things therefore infinite ? If so, they are equal to one

another and to him that made them ! Its requirements too, they tell us, are infinite in regard to all intelligences. It follows then, that as much is required of persons of small, as of large abilities—as much of the ignorant as of the learned—of a child as of a man—of a man as of an angel ! If these wise men had been at the pains of consulting the bible it would have informed them, that “ Unto whomsoever *much* is given, of him shall *much* be required,” (Mat. xii. 48.) and that in regard to every service, as well as that of which the apostle here particularly speaks, “ if there be first a willing mind it is accepted according to that a man *hath*, and not according to that he hath *not*,” (2. Cor. viii. 12.) which, all the universe over, must be admitted as a fair and equal principle of legislation and government.

Proceeding on, for one step in error usually prepares the way for another, they assume that an infraction of this infinite law is an infinite offence ; which being the case, *all* offences must be infinite, for all are violations of the same law, and, therefore, all offences, whether committed by a wise man or a fool—a lord or his slave—by one possessing great, or another possessing small advantages—whether committed in the blaze of gospel day, or in the gloom of pagan night—under strong, or under weak temptations—attended with aggravating, or with mitigating circumstances—all are equal ! Nor is this the worst consequence, for if *one* sin is infinite, then it is equal to all the sins together that have ever been committed, for all together can make no more than an infinity. The school-boy who defrauds his fellow in a game of push-pins, in violating an infinite law, and thereby contracting guilt corresponding in turpitude to the dignity of the law sinned against, draws down upon his soul as much condemnation as though he had denied, betrayed, and crucified the son of God ! or as though he had in his own person committed every crime that has ever been perpetrated since time began ! Upon my word, persons who can believe all this must have an easy credulity !

But further ; the offence being infinite, the punishment, we are told, must also be infinite. This is the philosophical groundwork—the rationale of the doctrine of endless misery. It hence follows that he who knew his Lord’s will and failed to do it, will be beaten with no more stripes than he will who knew it not ! See a beautiful confirmation of this rare divinity in Luke xii. 47.

A punishment that is infinite in all cases, can be no greater in one case than in another: how greatly then was Paul deceived in supposing that crimes committed under the gospel, demanded greater punishment than did those committed under the law! "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the son of God, and hath accounted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace?"\* (Heb. x. 28, 29.) Moreover, Christ informed the scribes and Pharisees that they should receive the *greater* damnation, (Mat. xxiii. 14.) and a *greater*, if any dependence may be placed on logic, implies a *less*. That there are degrees in punishment, then, is a doctrine of undoubted scriptural sanction, and it hence follows that it is not infinite, for infinity admits of no degrees.

The law of God, speaking of it not in a particular, but in a general sense, is a copy of his eternal perfections—is a necessary emanation from his pure and holy nature: to understand its character, therefore, we have but to know that of its author. Is he good? so is it. (Rom. vii. 12. 16.) Is he holy? It also is holy. (ibid.) Is he pure? It also is pure. (Psl. xix. 8.) Is he love? His law is love likewise. (Mat. xix. 40.) Is he just? It too is just. (Rom. vii. 12.) Is he perfect? His law is perfect also. (Psl. xix. 7.) On his law, therefore, the divine Being has stamped the impress of himself. No thinking man will hesitate a moment to admit this fact.

All wise and just law is instituted for the benefit of the governed; human laws, as they emanate from imperfect beings, often lose sight of this end; and by as much as they do, they are unwise and unjust—sometimes the offspring of tyranny—sometimes of caprice, interest, conceited ignorance, or misdirected benevolence—but always marked with the imperfection of their authors. God's law, on the contrary, is absolutely perfect, and

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\* The intention of the apostle's argument here is, that as there was no escape for those who committed the highest class of offences under the law, so apostates from Christ, being still more deserving of punishment, as they sinned against greater obligations, should more certainly and more terribly perish, in the judgements then impending over the obstinate enemies of Christ's cause. It is as though a judge should say in passing sentence on a criminal, "You must not hope that executive clemency will be exercised in your case; for if such an one escaped not, who committed a similar act with less atrocity in the manner, and under less aggravated circumstances, of how much sorer punishment must you be thought worthy, who have slaughtered a fellow being in a most cruel manner, and in cool blood."

must succeed in effecting the final good of all for whose behoof it was instituted.\* Deny this, and you deny the plainest dictates of common sense. The penalties of this law—how severe soever—must be compatible with this design; for a greater absurdity could not exist in terms than the declaration, that the penalties of an infinitely perfect law are such as will defeat its own ends. The doctrine of endless misery, therefore, is an absurdity in terms.

The quibbler may essay to evade the above conclusion by affirming that if the *general* good be secured, (even at the expense of a certain amount of *private* good,) the original object of the law will be answered, in like manner as human governments frequently find it necessary to sacrifice guilty individuals in order to secure the public weal. But this plea is not valid: human governments are extremely defective—yet even they, in proportion as they are wise and just, aim at the universal good; if they fail of effecting this end, it is from want of power; when they sacrifice individuals they plead necessity for the act; but as men advance in enlightenment, they discover this plea to have no foundation in fact, and, consequently, amongst the most refined nations capital punishments are grown into disrepute. Whether in human governments this necessity does, or does not exist, it certainly does not in the government of God. Does he love every individual? Then his law respects the final good of every individual. Is that law perfect? Then all its proposed ends must infallibly be effected. Universal salvation results of course. But let us go to the scriptures once more. “Think not,” saith Christ, “that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil, for verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot, or one tittle, shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled.” (Mat. v. 17. 18.) That this has not reference to the Jewish ceremonial law is obvious, for *it* Christ did come to abolish, as saith Paul, “The law was our school-master to bring us unto Christ, but after that faith is come we are no longer under a school-master.” (Gal. iii. 24.) It was the moral law which Christ came to fulfil, and how is it to

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\* It is not strictly proper to speak of the divine law as having been *instituted*, for like himself it must have been from eternity; being, as already remarked, a necessary emanation from his all perfect nature.

be fulfilled? By every individual being brought to comply with its requirements; and what are these? "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; this is the first and great command, and the second is like unto it; thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself; on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." (Mat. xxii. 37. 40.) To the same purpose speaketh James, "If ye fulfil the *royal* law; thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye shall do well," (Jam. ii. 8.) and Paul likewise, "Love worketh no ill to its neighbour, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." (Rom. xiii. 9.) On every being in the universe must this law be equally binding—all, however, are not equally capable of understanding its claims, and, consequently, the obligations of all in regard to it are not equal, nor for the same reason is a noncompliance with it equally culpable in all—for culpability is in proportion to the obligations violated—and the obligations of each are in proportion to the capacity and opportunities of each. However, if not one jot or tittle is to pass from the law till all be fulfilled, it follows that all are to be brought eventually to comply with its requirements, in loving God supremely, and each other as themselves. Hence we again arrive at the result that all mankind shall be saved.

Those who, in the effort to screen God from blame in the business of endless punishment, are in the habit of referring it to the inexorable character of his law, usually attempt to illustrate the matter by the example of Zeleucus the lawgiver. To one of his statutes was appended the penalty of the loss of both eyes on the part of its transgressor; it turned out that his own son was the first among his subjects to incur this heavy doom; the king, as may be believed, was much afflicted at the circumstance, that his only heir and presumptive successor in the government, should be subjected to a punishment which would forever blast his expectations in life; yet the penalty must be inflicted, or his laws would sink into contempt. He therefore determined at length to yield to the violated statute the two eyes which it demanded; but instead of having both taken from his son he shared the punishment with him, and yielded one of his own! By this means, we are told, he secured the most unbounded respect of his subjects toward himself and government.



The conduct imputed to Zeleucus may have been well enough on his part, but would it be suitable to the wisdom—the justice—the benevolence, of the legislator of heaven and earth? In the statute-book of his dominion, there surely exists no law, the operation of which he will have cause to deplore. One necessary cause of the impotence of human law is, that *its penalties are arbitrary*—by which I mean that they do not grow out of the offence—their only connexion with it being the result of positive enactment. They, therefore, seldom tend to amend the subject, or even to prevent others from committing, or the subject from repeating the same crime. They, moreover, fail of making any amends to the statute violated, or the party or parties injured thereby. The law of Zeleucus was characterized by all these defects, and according to the theory of endless suffering, such are also the characteristics of the law of Heaven. For, is it pretended that between the sinful acts of men, and their suffering in ceaseless fire, there is any necessary connexion? If not, then the penalty is *arbitrary*. Is it pretended that it will yield reparation to the violated law? or to the party or parties sinned against? or will it tend to the emendation of the sufferer? or to deter others from imitating his example? If neither of these, then is it not most undeniably a gratuitous cruelty.

But it will be said, perhaps, that I lose sight in this argument of the main object of punishment, viz., that of *rendering satisfaction to the law*. But I deny that the law is satisfied with the punishment of its violator, for punishment is not an *end* in legislation, it is but a *means* to an end—the end itself is *obedience*. It is the essence of silliness to suppose that the law will rest satisfied with the means, while the end is unaccomplished. But the theory of ceaseless suffering supposes this. Therefore, said theory is the essence of silliness. Is the physician satisfied with the ministry of medicine to a patient, without reference to his cure? Or the farmer with the putting in of his seed without reference to a harvest?

If God's law *has not* respect to the ultimate good of the punished, then, as it regards him, it is *not benevolent*—and if not benevolent, it is also *not just*. If it *has* respect to his final good this will be the issue of its operations with regard to him. Either this conclusion is just, or the law is imperfect; but the

law is not imperfect ; therefore the conclusion is just. Logic, then, brings us to the very truth attested by the saviour, and before quoted, viz., that the law of God, in every jot and tittle, which is love to God and to our neighbors, shall infallibly be fulfilled, in the universal obedience of all the intelligences for whose behoof it exists.

I ask now, are the penalties annexed to this law, such as will defeat its intentions, and render impossible its fulfilment ? They certainly are, if the theory of unceasing punishment be true, for in that case, myriads of myriads of beings will eternally remain in a state of rebellion against God, and of enmity toward each other. To render the absurdity of this still more glaring, we will again have recourse to comparison.

A preceptor, having under his care numerous pupils of highly respectable parentage, is anxious to advance them to the highest possible state of intelligence, in order that they may prove ornaments to society, and creditable to himself as their instructor ; he accordingly frames a strict code of disciplinary rules for their guidance, and enacts among other things, that any pupil who shall for a certain term of time neglect his studies, shall forever thereafter be debarred from all means of mental improvement, and be doomed to perpetual ignorance. Reader, can you see any fitness between such a law, and the preceptor's original design ? On the contrary, could he have adopted a surer measure for its frustration ? And think you that in the government of the universe, God thus weakly legislates against his own purposes ? You must deem but meanly of his wisdom if you do.

The only plea now remaining for endless misery connected with this subject is, that by its penal operations upon the offender, the law will secure the respect to which it is entitled. This plea is good as it regards limited and emendatory punishment ; but as it regards that which is endless, it is utterly void of force, for a law which acts against its own ends—which respects not the ultimate good of those upon whom its penalties fall—and which is therefore blind—weak—vindictive—and inconsistent—is in fact entitled to no respect, and can never secure it from rational beings ; a servile compliance with its mandates, from motives of fear, it may indeed exact, but in that case it can with no propriety be called “ *the perfect law of Liberty.*” God's way

of securing respect for his law, consists in his having made it so reasonable in itself—so just—so pure—so benevolent—so everything that it should be—that the mind truly enlightened in regard to its nature and claims, cannot but choose to obey its dictates—most cheerfully and heartily to obey them: if all minds do not *now* so choose, it is because all minds are not *now* so enlightened; but the covenant of God's love, which promises to bless all mankind in Christ Jesus, implies his purpose thus ultimately to enlighten all, and to bring all to obey this law, as the means of that blessedness. "I will put my law in their minds," saith God, as before quoted, "and will write it in their hearts." And then will have come to pass the prediction of the prophet, "And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children." (Isaiah liv. 13.) "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God." (John, vi. 45.) Thus what the prophet foretold, Christ has sanctioned.

How beautiful, then, is the light which the scriptures have thrown upon this interesting subject! and how opposed, at every step, are its conclusions, to the drear and spirit-blighting theory of endless suffering! According to their teaching, as before shown, God's law, like himself, is love; its perfection consists in its adaptedness to convert the soul. (Psl. xix. 7.) God's veracity is pledged that he will write on all hearts, (Heb. viii. 11, 12.) and when this is done, all will obey it. "The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus," will set them free "from the law of sin and death," (Rom. viii. 2.) herein consists the blessedness of the upright, that "his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night." (Psl. ii. 2.) Reader, get possession of this law of love, and it will lead you to visit the fatherless and the widow—to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God—to love your enemies—to overcome evil with good—and thus to assimilate to the character of your father in heaven. "Great peace have they that love the law of God, and nothing shall offend them," (Psl. cxix. 165.)

## UNIVERSAL SALVATION

## DIRECTLY AND POSITIVELY PROVEN FROM THE RELATIONS OF GOD TO MAN.

1. AS OUR CREATOR.—He must be, in a remote sense at least, responsible for the issue of our being, and according as it shall prove a blessing or a curse, he may be regarded as a benefactor or an enemy, and we shall have endless reasons for gratitude toward him, or for resentment. It is vain to attempt an evasion of this consequence, for if it be said that our misery would not have been, but for our sin, it must also be admitted that our sin would not have been, but for our existence, nor our existence, but for our creator: to this conclusion, then, it must come at last, and here it must rest. What man, though ever so much depraved, would consent to be a parent, with the certain knowledge before him, that his offspring would be a subject of misery and degradation in this life, and of ceaseless and hopeless suffering in another? And provided he did so consent, might not his offspring justly account him his foe, and hold him accountable for all the evils of his wretched being? It would certainly not avail the parent to plead that he was actuated by benevolent motives in conferring that existence, and that he designed it should prove a blessing to the recipient; for how could he have *designed* that for good which he *knew* would prove an evil? Man, however, though possessing the foresight supposed, might plead the strength of his sensual inclinations, and the insufficiency of his moral principles of resistance, not in excuse, but in extenuation of his pernicious act; but could the divine character, in a similar case, find shelter under such a plea? No, for “God cannot be tempted with evil,” (James i, 13.) nor has he sensual inclinations to gratify.

“But,” inquires an objector, “may not the creator have made man subject to the liabilities supposed in the doctrine of endless misery, *with the view of testing his obedience?*—for if man were not left to his own election between good and evil, how could his virtue as a moral agent be put to the proof?” A sheerer fallacy never perplexed the poor human brain! What! the almighty

maker of man must have recourse to tests to know the qualities of what he creates ! It is to be hoped then, that he is made wiser by his experiments ! But supposing such a test necessary, still it might have been made without involving *endless*, and, therefore, *irremediable* consequences. That man is left to his choice between good and bad is not denied ; but it is denied that infinite benevolence has suspended his weal or woe, for eternity, on so frail and fickle a thing as the human will—more especially as he could not but foresee the result of such suspension.

A father having mixed a quantity of arsenic with some white sugar, puts the compound into the hands of his children, acquainting them at the same time with its poisonous qualities, and cautioning them against eating of it ; they, however, seduced by its appearance, and detecting nothing but agreeableness in the taste, disbelieve, or disregard the parental admonition, allow their appetites the dangerous indulgence, and experience death as the consequence. The neighbours of the father, hearing that the children came into possession of the poison by his agency, inquire his motives in arming his poor offspring with the means of self-destruction. “Merely by way of experiment,” he replies, “upon their faith in my word, and obedience to my commands.” The neighbours inquire again if he did not foresee the probable issue of the experiment. “Yes,” he answers, “not only the *probable*, but the *certain* issue, was as clear to me before the trial as it is since—still, I *meant* no harm to my children by the affair ;” can you not, reader, anticipate the judgement of the neighbours upon this cruel transaction ? “Wretch !” methinks I hear them exclaim, “You are guilty of the murder of your children ! you supplied them with the instrument of death, full well knowing how fatally to themselves they would employ it ; and now you seek to deafen your conscience to the voice of their blood by the weak plea, that you *designed* a result, different from what you were *assured* would take place ! you are convicted, sir, out of your own mouth.” Yet is this contemptible apology the best that can be found, by the advocates of unending woe, for the defence of the divine character. God *designed* well in creating those to whom he *knew* their existence would prove an endless curse.

Let us conceive Jehovah as existing alone—in the solitude of unpeopled space. Stood he then in need of creatures like us, to

augment his happiness?—to increase his power?—to perfect his perfections? No; for infinity is insusceptible of increase. What, then, prompted him to create? Was it the desire to test his creative skill? No; for omniscience does not gather knowledge from experiments. The only conceivable motive in this case is that of *benevolence*, in order that it might have objects on which to expand itself; being infinitely happy in himself, the creator was prompted to produce sentient creatures by a propensity to communicate that happiness. And in proportion as beings are multiplied, in that proportion are the participants of that exhaustless felicity also multiplied. Here is an end worthy of a God! an end, reasonable, benevolent, glorious! philosophy approves it as probable, religion as just and true; this is a cornerstone in the universalist faith, and for want of such a foundation, the thousand and one theories in religion are as unstable as the ocean's waves, and as unsubstantial as their foam; happily we are saved the labour of proving this important point, by the fact that it is self-evident, and, therefore, by no party in theology denied: yet, although none deny it in *terms*, many do in *effect*—for is not the doctrine of endless misery, to all intents and purposes, a total denial of it?

In the deity's discourse with Jonah, how affectingly is his relation to man, as creator, urged as a reason for the display of his mercy. "Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow, which came up in a night, and perished in a night; And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than six score thousand souls that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand, and also much cattle." (Jonah iv. 10, 11.) The prophet, it seems, had been more painfully affected about the perishing of a gourd, because he had found a shelter in its shade from the torrid sun, than about the prospective destruction of a large city with its entire population! and inasmuch as he had predicted this destruction, he would have preferred it should ensue, rather than that his preaching should fall into disrepute! God, therefore, condescended to show the callous prophet the ground of his own benevolent interest in this vast multitude—he had (so to speak) laboured for them, and made them to grow—they were the work of his hands—his benevolence had prompted him to create, and

it now prompted him to save them. Ye prophets of ceaseless woe, we may in charity hope *you* will be less pained in the end, that your preaching is falsified in the happy event of a whole world's salvation, than if it should be verified in the utter ruin of even a solitary individual.\*

Moses has recorded that God saw all things, when he had made them, to be *very good*, (Gen. i. 38.) implying, of course, that they were answerable to the benevolent purposes for which he had created them. The author of any mechanical, or other contrivance, accounts it to be good or bad, according as he sees it is or is not adapted to meet his original intentions. God saw to what result his works would come—he saw whether the utter and irretrievable damnation of myriads of beings would be among those results; and if he did indeed foresee this consequence, and yet in view of it, pronounced his works “very good,” it must follow that he designed it, and then of what value are all the scriptural assurances of his goodness?—and what credit is due to them?

Moses has also recorded that God blessed the first human pair, and bade them “multiply and replenish the earth.” (Gen. i. 23.) For what? that hell might be populated? for such, according to the dogma under consideration, he foresaw would be the case. In the name of God—and religion—and consistency—oh ye abettors of this dark creed! I call upon you to ponder well this important matter. Would infinite love thus encourage our unsuspecting parents to multiply their kind, even to millions of millions, to the end that the dark realms of unending woe should be peopled? Would not an imputation of so odious a character, add blackness to our blackest conceptions of cruelty? Surely this encouragement to propagate the species, implies that the divine benevolence had charged itself with their safe keeping, and through whatsoever vicissitudes of sin and suffering the offspring

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\* It would, however, seem not, from the feeling they often manifest on this subject. Whilst yet a minor, in Philadelphia, I once went to hear a celebrated orator declaim (declamation it proved in *fact*, argument in *profession*) against the growing and dangerous heresy of universalism. I shall never forget the following passage in the discourse—in my boyish simplicity, I thought it grand at the time. “What! admit the sinner into heaven! If Jehovah could commit such folly (I speak it with reverence) the meanest saint in that bright realm, would rise indignant from his golden throne, and spurn the wretch to hell!” Think of that now! How beautiful! How sublime! How *modest* withal! The preacher himself was not a sinner—not he: and so being not a sinner, he and his class will doubtless have heaven entirely to themselves; for Christ Jesus came into the world to save *saints*, it seems, not *sinners*.

of that sinning pair might intermediately pass, yet was it the purpose of that undying love, most faithfully to redeem the implied pledge.

It is affirmed of God in the scriptures that he "will have a regard to the work of his hands," (Job xiv. 15.) hence all his works are frequently called upon—together with "every thing that hath breath, to praise the name of the Lord." (Psl. cl. 6.) I know not with what reason or justice every creature can be required to praise God, except they are to be the gainers by the existence which they have received at his hands: on this ground it is most just; and most heartily, methinks, will that praise be accorded when in the morning of that immortal day, which is to be signalised by the triumph of infinite love over death, and darkness, and sin, they shall see the mysteries of divine providence during the night of time unfolded, and to have issued by means to them the most unpromising in the most happifying and perfect consummation; then we shall truly find all beings uniting in the ascription, "Thou art worthy, oh Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power, for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are, and were created." (Rev. iv. 11.)

Men have been much puzzled, in different ages, to account for the existence of evil—they have been at a loss how to reconcile the fact with the established doctrine of the infinite goodness of the creator; the Magian, or Zoroastrian religion, (which prevailed throughout ancient Chaldea,) attempted to solve this mystery, by the supposition that there are two creators, of equal, or nearly equal power; the one the source of all good, the other the source of all evil: which doctrine is still substantially (though not avowedly) maintained by a majority of christians; who trace all that is good to God, and all that is bad to the devil! so that the prevalent christian creed, so far as respects this particular, is but the Magian creed revived in a new form. But with this advantage in favour of the latter, that Zoroaster taught that the author of all good would eventually overcome and extirpate the author of all evil, and goodness should then be sole, supreme, and universal. Whereas the class of christians referred to, think that evil will be co-eternal with good—that there will never, in the boundless future, be found a remedy by infinite goodness, for the evils which shall overspread his dominions!



The scriptures are most satisfactory, most philosophical, upon this puzzling point; they teach that "of God are all things," (Rom. xi. 36. 1 Cor. viii. 6. 2 Cor. v. 18. Rev. iv. 11.) they represent Jehovah himself as saying, "I form the light and create darkness, I make peace *and create evil*. I the Lord do all these things." (Isaiah xlv. 7.) "Can there," they ask, "be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it!" (Amos iii. 6.) and again, "Shall we receive *good* at the hand of the Lord, and shall we not receive *evil* also?" (Job ii. 10.) "Affliction cometh not forth of the dust!" they affirm, "neither doth trouble spring out of the ground." (Job v. 6.) All these things are, in the scriptures, most consistently resolved into the power and appointment of Heaven, for wise and benevolent ends. Hence, they are evils only in a *relative*, not in an *absolute* sense—evils as they are connected with *our*, but not as they are connected with *God's* agency, for what *we* mean unto an evil result, God means unto good. (Gen. i. 20.)

"Happy the man who sees a God employ'd  
In all the good and ills that chequer life.  
Resolving all events, with their effects  
And manifold results, into the will  
And arbitration wise of the Supreme."—*Cowper*.

This is the language of a philosophical christian, and it speaks the religion and philosophy of the bible. We were not designed, in this mode of being, for either *moral* or *physical* perfection—the same creator who gave ferocity and an appetite for blood to the beast of prey, gave to man also the passions and appetites which prompt him to crime, and prove to him frequently the sources of that moral and physical misery inseparable from human life. Man, however, is gifted with reason, to enable him to restrain the animal impulses, and to allow them such exercise only as is consistent with his duty and true happiness. God holds him responsible for the use he makes of all his functions: as his moral principles, or his animal nature predominates, he assimilates to God, or to the brute, and is accordingly happy or miserable.

"Two principles in human nature reign,  
Self-love to urge, and reason to restrain,  
Nor this or good, nor that a bad we call,  
Each works its end to rule or govern all."—*Pope*.

Paul, in plain prose, speaks the same truth, "But I see another law in my members, warring against the law in my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." (Rom. vii. 23.) In all which there is this utility, that our moral virtue is thus put to trial—Good and evil—life and death—are set before us—on our choice depends our condition—not hereafter, but here—and we hence learn from experience the happiness which flows from virtue, and the misery from vice; which experience is not to be lost to us when we shall have departed this stage of action, but, on the contrary, is to have a beneficial bearing upon our whole future being.

From this view of things we gather a lesson of most cheering and practical influence: we learn to adore the perfections of our creator; because if nothing exists independently of him, then all things are subject to his control; and in what difficulties or evils soever we may become involved, his power and grace are equal to our extrication; whatever is, is for a wise and good end; and for the same end, man is what he is, "For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly," [that is, not by the creature's will, for the creature could have no will in the matter of its creation,] "but by reason of him who subjected the same in hope. Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God." (Rom. viii. 20, 21.) Some have supposed, (the celebrated JOHN WESLEY among them,) on the authority of this, and a few other passages, that even the brute creation are destined to a future, and happier state of existence, and I know no good reason why they should not be, for their present state is one of much suffering; and with the highly gifted BULWER, (in a work of his entitled "THE STUDENT,") I deem it probable that the all-beneficent creator, has in reserve for them an ample compensation for their present sufferings. However this may be, it is a matter of inspired record that such is the case with regard to man. "Our light afflictions which are but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding, and eternal weight of glory."

From the whole, then, it results, that we are God's property—he made us for himself—not for the devil—that we might partake, and reflect, his goodness and glory—not that in our ruin we might reflect his cruelty and his disgrace—all the attributes of

his nature are so many sufficient pledges, that we shall infallibly answer the beneficent end to which he designed us—while at the same time they all combine to assure us what that end is—and hence, as before remarked, we are under the strongest of obligations to lift our hearts toward him in confidence and love—and to devote to his most reasonable service those powers of body and mind, which we have received from his forming hand.

2. AS OUR FATHER. Our opponents seem aware of the consequence against their dogma to be drawn from this relation, and they, therefore, deny its *universality*; “it only exists,” say they, “in regard to the truly pious;” and they find a number of texts of scripture which they think sanction this restriction. For example: “As many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God,” (Rom. viii. 14.) whence it seems logically to follow, that as many as are *not* so led, are *not* God’s sons; and it is granted that they certainly are not, in the sense intended. They also find, that while some in the scriptures are addressed as, *in a particular sense*, the children of God; others are spoken of as “the children of the wicked one,” or “the devil.” Hence they actually maintain that mankind consists of two classes—the one the offspring of God—the other of satan! Than which a sentiment more odious, or more pernicious in its consequences, was surely never adopted; a little attention to scriptural phraseology will set this point in a plain and satisfactory light.

It is known to every attentive biblical student, that in figurative language, a person was said to be the child even of any circumstance or abstract quality, by which he was distinguished; hence we read of children of *light*—of *the day*—of *darkness*—of *Belial*—of *God*—of *this world*—of *the resurrection*—of *the bridegroom*—of *the kingdom*—of *perdition*—of *affliction*—of *consolation*—of *thunder*—of *peace*—of *strife*—of *cunning*—of *guile*—&c. &c. If we are to understand any of these expressions in a strict sense, why not all? Is it not obvious, that neither of these were designed for a literal interpretation?

A person was also said to be the child of another, whose dispositions or example he copied; hence, Jabal is called “the father of such as dwell in tents and have cattle;” Jubal is called “the father of such as play upon the harp and organ;” and Tubal-Cain, “the father of all such as work in brass and iron.” (Gen.

iv. 20, 21.) To the proud and persecuting Jews, Christ said, "Ye are of your father the devil, and his works ye do," (John viii. 44.) "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham." (ibid. 31.) Now in point of fact, they were Abraham's children; but they were not so by *resemblance of character*, or in a *practical* sense: so Christ, when he enjoins certain virtues, urges as a motive to their performance, "that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven." (Mat. v. 45.) By losing sight of the figurative usage here, one would think that the party addressed, were *not* the children of God—else, why are they directed what to do in order to become such? But the attentive reader will discover that Christ distinctly recognises the divine relation to them; for he calls God their "Father in heaven," which implies of course that they were in *reality* his offspring, and by practicing the virtues enjoined, they would become such *characteristically* or *practically*. To the same amount Peter, after commending the virtues of Sarah, Abraham's wife, adds by way of encouragement to the women of the churches to which he wrote, "whose daughters ye are, so long as ye do well." (1 Pet. iii. 6.) They would thus become her *imitators*, and, according to the usage of speech in those times, her *daughters*.

We are not by any means free from the same usage now; it is still a common practice to call the disciples, or imitators of another, his children. Some we call the children of Calvin—some of Wesley—the physician we term a son of Esculapius, or of Hippocrates—the lover of music is a son of Apollo—the lover of wine and frolic is a son of Bacchus—the shoe-maker is a son of Crispin—the sailor a son of Neptune—the soldier a son of Mars—the strong man a son of Hercules, &c. Among the wild mountain clans of Scotland, this usage was still more prevalent; each individual, besides being the child of his chief, was also the child of whatever particular profession he followed, or circumstance which distinguished him.

It might with the same propriety be maintained, that because some are termed sons of *thunder*, they were therefore generated by an electrical explosion of the clouds—or because some are termed children of light, that they were therefore born in the sun, as to suppose that all are not the children of God, because of some being metaphorically termed "the children of the wicked

one." Truth is, that God is equally the father of every individual, but while the christian has within himself the evidence of this fact, and it is a source of peace and rejoicing to him; the wicked man is ignorant of it—is "without God, and without hope in the world." Plain as this point is, however, in itself, I am not disposed to beg its admission by the reader without proof, and therefore present the following circumstances in evidence.

1. We are equally the descendants of Adam, and he in the scriptures is termed "the son of God." (Luke iii. 23.) Surely if the original stream is related to the fountain whence it flowed, all the branches into which it has ramified, are equally related to it. 2. It is the duty and privilege of all to pray, and Christ directs, "when ye pray, say our Father who art in heaven." (Mat. vi. 9.) Christ would certainly not authorize our calling God what he is not! 3. Our spirits have a common source; hence, God is called the "father of our spirits," (Heb. xii. 9.) and "the God of the spirits of all flesh." (Num. xvi. 22.) 4. They have also a common destination; for "when the body returns to the dust whence it came, the spirit shall return to the God that gave it." (Eccle. xii. 7.) 5. We are all corporeally compounded of the same materials; "for God hath made of one blood all nations of men, to dwell upon all the face of the earth," (Acts xvii. 25.) and "in him we live, and move, and have our being," (ibid.) 6. The fact is expressly declared, "For there is one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." (Ephes. iv. 6.) 7. It is also interrogatively affirmed, (which is the strongest form of affirmation, being a question which involves its own answer,) "Have we not all one Father?" (Mal. ii. 6.)\* 8. And Paul admitted the same to be true, even of the idolatrous Athenians, "Forasmuch, then, as ye are the offspring of God." (Acts xvii. 22.) Jehovah himself repeatedly does the same in regard to the rebellious Jews, "If I am a father, where is mine honor?" (Mal. i. 10.) Finally, we are positively declared to be related to God through Christ, who is "the

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\* Oh, the straits to which the advocates of a partial theology are reduced! "This affirmation," say they, "only has respect to the *Jewish priests*, whom the prophet was then addressing himself to." Indeed? Then when he adds, "Hath not one God created us all?" I suppose we are to understand him as meaning, that God is the creator of none but those priests!

head of every man," and "the head of Christ is God." (1 Cor. xi. 3.) Much more might be adduced to the same effect.

Sin may, indeed, and does, efface the divine image in us; it may, and does, render us unlike our Heavenly Father; it separates, too, between us and God; but it cannot dissolve the relation, nor the obligations, between the parties; for that relation, and those obligations, are not founded on any qualities we possess; but on the act of God in our creation, and nothing short of his uncreating us, can obliterate them. When the prodigal wandered from home—wasted his substance, and degraded himself, did he cease to be a son? And when at length, he reflected that he had a father, was he mistaken? Oh, no! the sequel proves him to have been correct, and it equally proves to us, that the paternal goodness of God, (for that is the point it was introduced to illustrate,) will long—long outlive our filial obedience and gratitude; God will not cease to be a father, even though we may cease to act as his children.

I have said above, that the theory which supposes mankind to be composed of two opposite parties, is exceedingly pernicious in its influences; argument can scarcely be required in support of this. If I belong to the devil—if he is my father—then to him is my filial obedience due—and God can have no counter claims upon it—every child is bound to love and obey his own parent. This is one evil consequence. Another is, that the parties standing toward each other in such opposite relations, will naturally cherish toward each other a militant disposition—the child of God will despise the child of the devil, and the latter will hate the former in return. How much of the seas of blood that has cried to the throne of heaven against the persecutor, has flowed from this source, the all-seeing God alone can tell. What if the husband should be a child of God, and the wife a child of the devil—will God, or the devil, claim the offspring? or will they divide the property in dispute agreeably to Solomon's decision?

The bible does, indeed, recognise two opposite *characters*—but not *classes* of men. So far is it from imputing all righteousness to one set of persons, and all wickedness to another, that it distinctly asserts, "the whole world lieth in wickedness," (John v. 20.) and "there is none righteous, no, not one." (Rom. iii. 10.)

The terms *righteous* and *wicked*, therefore, as they respect mankind, have but a *relative* signification ; for the most upright of men have some defects of character, and the most wicked some redeeming qualities ; if a division of mankind were attempted, it is certain that a vast majority would be neither on the one side nor the other, but on the dividing line ; it would be exceedingly difficult for the conflicting claims on the part of God, and the devil, to be adjusted in regard to this large majority, otherwise than by the judgement of Solomon before alluded to—by each of the subjects being equally divided between the parties. Thus much for the difficulties attendant on a gross interpretation of the figurative language of scripture. But if men, as the scriptures assert, belong to one heavenly parent, and one redeeming head, and are members one of another, then are they bound to each other in fraternal, and to their common parent in filial ties ; from these ties arise strong obligations, and from a discharge of these, ensues true happiness—happiness to each, happiness to all.

If an earthly father's love to his child will endure unimpaired through a long—long course of disobedience and provocation on the part of that child—if it will follow him in all his wanderings and rebellions—inviting his return—eagerly watching for occasions to restore him to virtue and to happiness : and even though that child's waywardness may have exhausted the parent's property—ruined his domestic peace, and almost broken his heart—if it will still cling to the ungrateful wretch—even down to death—water his ignominious grave with tears of anguish—and in bitterness of soul exclaim—“ Oh ! my son, my son ! would God I had died for thee ! ” (2 Sam. xviii. 13.) Or, in case the child become penitent, if it will still meet him more than half way—embrace him in its arms—bestow kisses of pardon on his cheek—and bedew his neck with tears of joy : (Luke xv. 30.) if, I say, earthly parental love will do this, what may not be argued from the love of heaven ?

“ Ah ! ” exclaims an objector, “ but God's love is not the same as that of an earthly parent.” No, not exactly the *same*, I grant, it differs from it, however, only in *degree*—not in *nature*. An earthly father's love *may* fail—its ardour may abate—for it is finite—it is even among possibilities for a mother's love to

cease toward her suckling child—but the parental love of God is higher than the utmost reach of human affection, by as much as heaven is higher than the earth. (Isa. lv. 9.) It is unfailing. (1 Cor. xiii. 8.) It is “an everlasting love.” (Isa. xxxi. 3.) “Many waters cannot quench it, neither can the floods drown it.” (Cant. viii. 7.) It existed toward us even when we were aliens, and enemies by wicked works,” (Col. i. 21.) and although for a time our sins may so far “separate between us and God,” as to hinder our enjoyment of his goodness, yet a total and final forfeiture of his love can by no circumstances be effected. (Rom. viii. 38.) As an earthly father would, were it in his power, make all his offspring—even the least deserving—unceasingly happy—*how much more* will our father in heaven—all-powerful as he is, as well as good—do the same for his children? Jesus Christ has expressly, and by his own repeated example, sanctioned comparisons of this nature—he enjoins, “Be ye therefore merciful, even as your Father in heaven is merciful.” (Luke vi. 37.) We should certainly hesitate to pronounce a parent merciful, who should inflict protracted and aggravated miseries upon his children, *without reference to any merciful end!*

We argue not from this divine relation, that God will not *punish* us according to the demerit of our crimes—on the contrary, we insist that he will—but be it remembered, that to punish a child is one thing—to ruin him is another.

The stern old Roman, (Brutus) who sacrificed his offspring for an act of treachery to his country's freedom, is said to have betrayed no emotion during the terrible execution of the sentence. His patriotism and impartiality, have been the subject of lavish praise, but mankind have scarcely accepted these considerations, in atonement for his outrage upon the ties of nature.

In the history of our country, there is an incident of much moral beauty; it relates to the time of our war with the French and Indians, while we were yet the subjects of the British crown. A man by the name of Dunning, being at work in his field, saw a party of Indians approach his dwelling, where lay his sick wife and infant child, to whom it was out of his power to extend protection; but his older children were at play together close at hand, and, conceiving it possible to save at least one of them, he seized a horse, and rode up to the group with the purpose of



selecting the child most dear to him, and effecting his escape with that one ; when, however, he came to the business of selection, he found it impossible to fix his preference in favour of one to the exclusion of the rest ; and he therefore resolved on making a desperate effort for the rescue of the whole. Accordingly, he drove them on before him, interposing his own person betwixt them and the fire of the savages, and thus, at his own imminent risk, he succeeded in his noble undertaking of saving all his children. What a beautiful instance of paternal love ! A father throws his own life between his children and ruin—mere *temporal* ruin—and that father but a man—a child of dust ! But the infinite Being, we are told, will abandon millions—ay—millions of millions—of his offspring—the work of his hands—to a doom of infinite woe !

Reader, are you a father ? Have you a child after your own likeness, or the likeness of her whom you love as yourself ? If so, look now upon that child, and tell me, if you have the heart of a man, whether any—the worst conceivable provocation on his part, can so utterly alienate your affections from him, and blunt your sensibilities in regard to him, that you could abandon him to utter and hopeless ruin—to a state in which he would be *lost*—in the most absolute sense of the word—lost to virtue, to happiness, to you, to his God, even to *hope* itself, (the last to desert the miserable,) and to all the purposes of his existence ! Can you, sir, render affirmative answers to these questions ? The Lord pity you for a wretch, if you can ! and if you cannot, then, I pray you, avoid the blasphemy of imputing to the “ Father of mercies,” acts of cruelty, at which even *your* better nature revolts !

Oh ! how many an earnest prayer has gone up to the throne of Heaven, from the hearts of parents, who mistakenly conceived their children to be liable to a doom of ceaseless fire ! And to that all-seeing eye, which can analyse all human thoughts, what intense—what poignant solicitude is often discernible in these supplications ! “ Oh ! my God,” (we may conceive to be the substance of these parental breathings,) “ compassionate the sorrow-stricken heart of a father ! and arrest the steps of my thoughtless and wayward child, that they take him not down to depths of ruin, beyond the reach of thy grace. Oh ! let not my soul in his loss deplore the eternal blight of its hopes, and all the

fond expectations of my trusting heart—that as thou hadst given him to me in love, that same almighty love would charge itself with his safekeeping, until he reached the bliss at thy right hand—oh! let not these expectations issue in a harvest of despair! And, oh Lord! pity also the mother on whose bosom he hung, and who watched over his infancy with the vigilance of a love, which among finite beings, none but a mother can know. Oh! how can she endure, that a plant she so cherished, should grow up but to be blasted by thy wrath! Pity us! pity us, Lord! and if the bolt of thy displeasure must have an object, let it fall on me, but let the mother and her offspring live! Oh, let not our sun go down in so dark a cloud, as that which bodes his ruin!” Alas! alas, old man! know you not, that the love of heaven for the subject of your solicitude, even infinitely exceeds your own? Think you that your son has a stronger hold in your regards—all frail and limited as you are—than in those of the God that made him? Does the affectionate mother need to be implored to be kind to the infant at her breast? much less does the love of our Father [in heaven, need to be moved toward his offspring, by their feeble supplications—can a little drop agitate an ocean? or an atom discompose the order and harmony of the universe? *Then* will infinite love require to be moved by that which is finite. Hence with the poet we may say—

“And will Jehovah condescend  
To be my father and my friend?  
Then let my songs with angels join,  
Heaven’s secure if God is mine.”

And here I may as well stop, for there is no end to the argument for the ultimate salvation of mankind from the paternal relations of God.

3. AS OUR MORAL GOVERNOR.—We usually account a ruler to be wise and good, in proportion as the subjects of his government are prosperous and happy. The best of earthly sovereigns, however, cannot entirely prevent crime, and its attendant miseries from infesting their dominions, but in proportion as they can and do secure this result, are their administrations admired, and they themselves accounted the benefactors of their people. Suppose that we were informed by an intelligent traveller, that in journeying through a certain country, he found the

people in the most degraded situation conceivable—that in whatever direction he went amongst them, he could hear little else than descriptions of the terrible vengeance of their king—his horrid prisons—solitary cells—racks, pullies, and other torturing instruments—and the groans and screams of the hapless inmates of these drear abodes. And suppose this traveller should further inform us that the officers of this king, and those who assumed to know his character and interpret his designs, were in the constant habit of enforcing his mandates upon the people by appeals—to their fears in reference to these horrors. Should we not from this description, conclude that said king was a monstrous tyrant?

If it be asked whether an earthly ruler would be justified in allowing crime and suffering to enter his dominion—supposing he had the power to keep them out? it must be answered, No—except he could secure some ultimate good to his subjects by their admission—and that ultimate good must be so great, as fully to compensate for the temporary evils and misery which they occasioned, insomuch that in the issue, his subjects would be gainers by their admission. In that case he would be fully justified. On this ground alone, as I conceive, can the almighty ruler of the universe be acquitted of folly or cruelty, in having permitted sin and suffering to enter the world—for none are so weak as to suppose that he could not have had it otherwise. And do we not grossly slander his character when we affirm, that he permitted this state of things with the certain foresight that it would never be remedied, but would to all eternity be growing worse, and would involve in irreparable ruin many millions of his unfortunate subjects? They who can vindicate so cruel, and unwise an administration of affairs, must be entitled to some credit for their ingenuity!

A certain sovereign, whose empire was large and populous, and whose defences were so strong that no foe could invade his dominions, without his permission, who knew, moreover, that nothing would more gratify his malignant enemies than to be able to gain an entrance among his people, and by enticing them from their allegiance, to involve them in wretchedness and ruin. Yet this king gave orders that all the entrances and defences of his empire should be left unguarded, and every obstruction to the

ingress of the foe removed: which being done, they rushed eagerly in, and all the disastrous consequences which it was foreseen would follow, were soon apparent. Whereupon, he was wroth—very wroth—and ordained that the evils thus introduced among his subjects should never be wholly extirpated, and that all of his people who should omit to return to their allegiance within a certain brief space of time, should be abandoned irredeemably to the consequences of their rebellion, in addition to the most horrid tortures which it was in his power to inflict! Can you tell me, reader, who that sovereign was?

Is the above, then, a true representation of the ruler of the universe? It undeniably is if the theory of ceaseless punishment be true, but it by no means corresponds with God as he is revealed in the bible, however it may as he is revealed by Milton, for does the former teach that the universe will always be a scene of rebellion and suffering? Shall hatred eternally divide God's empire with love?—Sin with holiness? Hell with heaven? Shall the tide of ruin—deep, widespread, everlasting, be allowed to roll over his fair works by his own consent or connivance? No—no—no! this cannot be. On the contrary, if any dependence is to be put on inspired testimony, Jehovah shall reign throughout the universe in the supremacy of almighty, all-subduing love—to him shall every knee bow, and every tongue swear, that in him they have righteousness and strength, (Isa. xlv. 23.) every power inimical to the order and harmony of his government, shall be destroyed, (1 Cor. xv. 24, 25, 26.) corruption, dishonor, mortality, death, hades; shall be swallowed up in a victory of incorruption, glory, immortality, life and heaven, and God shall be all in all. (ibid.) Such will be the triumphant issue of the divine government; and with great propriety therefore, does the Psalmist exclaim, "The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice!" (Psl. xcvi. 1.) Oh! this cheering truth! what a guarantee does it afford, that all events—however complicated—however dark and unpromising to our imperfect perceptions—shall nevertheless issue in a final consummation, most cheering and salutary to every intelligent being! It is enough to know that love reigns—infinite love—to be assured that the affairs of the universe are wisely and benevolently administered, and that though "sorrow endureth for a night," yet the shades of that night

shall ere long pass away, and "joy cometh in the morning." (Psl. l. 30.)

It is an inquiry of grave moment, whether in the government of Jehovah a suitable distinction is maintained between the good and the bad in his *present* dispensations, or whether he defers the making of such distinction until the parties arrive in eternity. That the former is the case is evident from several considerations, but these it is not my purpose to introduce until I come to treat upon a *future judgment*; suffice it for the present to observe, that if the good were not *now* rewarded, and the wicked *now* punished, the former would become discouraged, and the latter emboldened, and thus great injustice would be done to both. Moreover we should not know virtue to be a *good*, nor vice to be an *evil*, but for their respective *effects*—nor is it enough that we merely *observe* these effects, we must *experience* them—Should we ever be likely to abandon a fountain whose waters were uniformly sweet to our taste? Or a tree, whose fruit was delicious? And can it comport with the justice (not to say goodness) of our divine ruler, to have so framed the moral system, that the very actions which tend to our final undoing, should be agreeable in their *present influences*, and that those actions which are promotive of our eventual good, should yield no *present enjoyment* to the actors? As well would it comport with the regards of a father to the welfare of his child to strew with flowers, and with tempting fruits, a path in which lies hidden a frightful precipice; for in such case he might assure himself of his child's destruction.

The laws of nature, it is true, have an equal operation upon all classes of men. God "maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust," (Mat. v. 45.) all classes are alike liable to sickness, poverty, pain, death, &c. Is there therefore no present and *sufficient* distinction among them? There undoubtedly is. "Great peace have they that love God's law, and nothing shall offend them," (Psl. cxix. 165.) but "there is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." (Isaiah lvii. 21.) The ways of wisdom (meaning virtue) are said to be "ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." (Prov. iii. 17.) On the contrary, "the way of transgressors is hard." (Ibid. xiii. 15.) We must therefore not commit the mistake of,

supposing, that because these distinctions are not always plain to our perception, that therefore they do not exist : neither must we suppose that because the good are not always rich and healthy, nor the wicked always in indigent or afflictive circumstances, that therefore the former are not sufficiently rewarded, nor the latter sufficiently punished.

“For what if virtue starves, while vice is fed,  
What then ? Is the reward of virtue bread ?”—*Pope.*

Solomon saith, “He that spareth the rod hateth his son,” [and so he does virtually—for he pursues toward him a course adapted for his ruin, and hatred could do no worse] “but he that loveth him, chasteneth him betimes.” (Prov. xiii. 24.) It is unaccountable that a different conduct should be thought of for a moment, as ascribable to the deity ! “Shall not the judge of all the earth do right ?” (Gen. xviii. 25.)

Conversing once with a preceptor of youth, who was of the opposite opinion—I advised him, with affected gravity, to adopt for his school a similar plan of government. “Instead,” said I, “of rewarding your meritorious, or punishing your culpable scholars, day by day, as they may deserve—enter against their names in a book every good or bad action which they may commit—and at the end of the year call them to an account for all their past conduct, and then reward or punish them respectively in gross : this will at once save you much trouble, and afford you an opportunity of vindicating the rectitude of your government to the collected mass.” My friend stared upon me in surprise—for I had taken care not to connect this advice with any allusion to his religious opinions—“Oh sir !” he exclaimed, “this plan would prove most weak and ruinous ! The meritorious scholars finding themselves so long neglected, would become disheartened ; the vicious ones would grow reckless and hardened from long impunity, and the school in that case would dissolve before the term expired ; but even if this consequence did not ensue, to inflict upon the culprits altogether the punishment they had demerited by their several misdemeanours throughout the term, would be to destroy them utterly—No, no, sir, it would not answer ! I should be foolish and weak indeed to govern my school by such a plan !”—“And yet, my friend,” I rejoined

“your creed ascribes precisely such a system of government to the sovereign of the universe !”

In nothing, perhaps, is the weakness of man more conspicuously displayed, than in his lowering the divine character even far beneath his own, and then affecting to reverence it as the very infinitude of perfection ! Let an earthly ruler but act as we represent Jehovah as acting, and he would earn for himself the unenviable reputation of a miscreant—a monster—we would assign him a niche in the temple of infamy with Caligula—with Domitian—with Marius—with Henry the eleventh of France—and eighth of England—and others of like hard heart and dark spirit, who stand prominent amongst the loathed and hated of mankind,

“By merit raised to that bad eminence.”

And yet we affect to regard with lavish praise those self-same odious attributes, when connected with an idol of our imagination to which we impiously apply the name GOD !!! It can surely then not be much wondered at, that so much depravity of character has been found among the worshipers of such a deity ; and that in the train of this radical and leading error so much that is absurd in theory, and nauseating and blighting in influence, should be found. The purest of hearts will in time be vitiated by constant communion with a bad being, and what worse being can be found in the universe (if we may except the devil) than he whom millions of blinded devotees adore as God ? Unsinning infants themselves, have been supposed the objects of his wrath ! The successive generations who have been born and perished in heathen lands, and without their own fault have never heard of him, it has been believed, will have to do penance for their ignorance in never-ceasing groans ! Many to conciliate him have traversed burning and sandy wastes ; many have clad themselves in sackcloth and denied themselves all the comforts of existence ; many have crouched down and been crushed under heavy cars ; walked barefooted over burning coals ; &c. &c., and even in our own time and country, how much anxiety of soul is experienced—how many hearts are crushed—and over how many a tender and amiable spirit is thrown the blasting and blighting influence of fear ? Does infinite hatred

occupy the throne of the universe? Is the king of heaven an almighty tyrant? Why—oh ye children of men, are ye not assured by the instructions of the bible? It calls upon you to rejoice, because God reigneth—it represents his goodness as unto all, and his tender mercy as over all his works—it tells you that the unthankful and the evil are also the subjects of his kindness—it points to God as the pattern and the perfection of those virtues which ye yourselves should practice—it sets forth the Lord Jesus to you as the embodied representative of those perfections—and was he a Being to break a bruised reed, or quench the smoking flax? were his ministrations such as were adapted to break the heart—or to paralyse it with despair?

I have before alluded to the conclusion we should form concerning a sovereign; from the reports of a traveler respecting the condition of his subjects—that if he found a great deal of suffering and oppression which were never to be brought to a beneficial termination, we should thence infer that said sovereign was a tyrant. Let us now imagine a celestial tourist to have just returned to the abodes of bliss from a wide flight for observation among the works of God—the hosts of heaven gather around him—each harp suspends its melodies, and each angelic minstrel bends forward with eager attention, not doubting that the disclosures about to be made will develope new mysteries of love and goodness on the part of their king, which shall awaken their harps to still loftier notes of praise.—But who can conceive their astonishment and dismay when they are told of a vast, vast world of liquid fire—and of myriads upon myriads of ill-fated spirits who are the sport of its angry billows—tempest-tost by the breath of omnipotent wrath—and live but for suffering—for ruin—for despair? And what has been their crime? Perhaps for long, long ages, they outraged their sovereign's laws—disturbed the harmony of his dominions—repaid his kindness with repeated rebellions and ingratitude—and multiplied their provocations in proportion as his blessings were multiplied upon them—until at length even infinite goodness was wearied out with their obstinate resistance to its influences, and abandoned them to their inevitable fate. But no; such is not the ground on which their ruin stands justified; on the contrary, their trespasses were of but momentary duration—committed in much ignorance,



and under strong temptations—from motives of self-gratification merely—and not of injury or arrogance to their Lord, who, indeed, is by his own nature, infinitely above the reach of evil. “And oh, my compeers!” continues the celestial narrator, “Could you see that dreadful abode of woe—and hear those frightful shrieks—those imploring groans—to which is rendered no other response than the echoes of their own despair! You would then see that our creator’s character has dark and odious aspects, such as are not dreamt of in this world of light! would that I could report, that from these miseries is to arise some ultimate object of benevolence to the sufferers! Alas! no such object is proposed; on every bolt which secures the portals of that horrid place I saw deeply engraven the dreadful word—**ETERNITY**—and the key, (I was informed,\*) when the last spirit doomed to pass through these portals shall have entered—is to be hurled by the hand of omnipotence to immeasurable depths in the abyss of space—and decreed there to rust for everlasting ages!”

Reader, can the truth of the above picture be admitted, and at the same time the infinite goodness of Jehovah be believed, without a solecism as gross as language was ever framed to express? Human ingenuity could scarcely be more poorly employed than when engaged to reconcile such flagrant contradictions; and there is no calculating the injury to the christian cause, which has ensued from this very source.

Who that has been, in imagination, with the indefatigable **LATUDE**, in his long and painful incarceration in the Bastille—with the no less dauntless and indomitable **TRENCK**, in the horrid hells of Prussia—or with the amiable **SILVIO PELLICO**, in his ten years’

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\* We must suppose the poet, Young, the informant in this case, as we know of no other to whom the secret touching the key of hell has ever been entrusted.

“What ensues?

The deed predominant! the deed of deeds!  
Which makes a hell of hell, a heaven of heaven.  
The goddess, with determined aspect, turns  
Her adamant key’s enormous size  
Through destiny’s inextricable wards,  
Deep driving every bolt, on both their fates:  
Then, from the crystal battlements of heaven,  
Down, down she hurls it through the dark profound,  
Ten thousand thousand fathom; there to rust,  
And ne’er unlock her resolution more.  
The deep resounds; and hell, through all her glooms,  
Returns in groans the melancholy roar.”

confinements in the dungeons of Spielburgh,—who that has in these cases been made acquainted with the dark and systematic expedients of oppression by which the unfortunate victims were kept for long and lingering years (to them *ages*) on the rack of mental and bodily suffering, and has not, in his very heart of hearts, cursed the odious tyrants by whom this suffering was inflicted? And yet these monsters in human form were *angels of mercy* in comparison with the almighty tyrant of the universe, if the doctrine of endless misery be true! They could not be present with their victims—they could not hear their affecting groans, nor know all their secret pangs—they could not sympathize in their feverish longings after liberty, the enjoyment of the sweet air of heaven, a sight of ever-varying and ever-beauteous nature, of kindred and friends—nor could they appreciate the depth of anguish which the wretch must feel who views himself as a link stricken out of the chain of human existence, and denied the privilege of acting his allotted part on the theatre of life. No, earthly kings cannot fathom the depth of woe their hapless victims experience; besides that their personal attention is not directed to them, but is engaged with their own pleasures and the affairs of state. But not such is the case with the Omniscient Being, and therefore the greater, and more inexorable tyrant he, if the acts imputed to him by human systems of faith be according to fact.

I have now gone through with the argument from the relations of God; as our Creator, Father, and Moral Governor: they lead us to the same conclusion as that to which we arrived from the consideration of his attributes; immense stores of argument to the same effect are still before us; have I, as yet, committed the smallest departure from candor? Has my reasoning in any instance been overstrained, or far-fetched? Have the premises been begged? or the deductions been illogical? If on any of these grounds I have offended, I am content, reader, to forfeit my credit with you to that amount. But if otherwise, I pray you to let your mind be open to the influence of truth, and to remember, that a true knowledge of our Creator's character, and of his relations to us, forms the basis of all vital and practical religion; and the basis too, of all true and lasting enjoyment.

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Time's swift advance is hastening near  
The moment of my spirit's flight,  
Soon, soon 'twill leave this darksome sphere,  
And spring to distant worlds of light:  
There bliss is known without alloy,  
And beauty blooms without decay;  
All thought of grief in cloudless joy  
Shall melt like morning mist away.

Adieu to sin, where boundless love  
Hath to himself all things subdued;  
Adieu to tears—that world above  
Shall sorrow's faintest sigh exclude.  
And thou, pale tyrant of the tomb!  
I soar beyond thy blighting breath:  
I go where fadeless glories bloom,—  
Adieu to sorrow, sin, and death!

'Twill there be my sublime employ  
My Maker's power and love to trace  
Through worlds on worlds of light and joy,  
Which people the unbounded space:  
And though I speed on wings of light  
For ever and for evermore,  
I cannot reach his glory's height,  
I cannot all his love explore.

Oh, bliss on bliss! to dwell with God!  
And his unveil'd perfections see;  
For wasteless ages my abode,  
Shall in his blissful presence be:  
And all that thought had e'er conceived  
Of beauty, glory, joy, and love,  
Or tongue express'd, or faith believed,  
I'll find surpass'd in worlds above.

There I shall on his bosom rest,  
Who gave his life to ransom me,  
And all mankind, in Jesus blest,  
Shall form one great society.  
And hark! from the enraptur'd throng  
Redeem'd from sin, from Hades freed,  
Salvation! bursts in ceaseless song;—  
Oh! there is bliss! 'tis bliss indeed!

E'en on this dim and distant sphere,  
We join our feeble notes of praise;  
Some gleams of glory reach us here,  
And our glad hearts with rapture raise.  
All praise to thee, thou GOD OF LOVE!  
Whose smiles are all the heaven we know!  
Our deathless powers in worlds above  
Their ceaseless gratitude shall show.

## UNIVERSAL SALVATION.

## FURTHER PROVED FROM THE SCRIPTURES.

FIRST. The doctrine of the ultimate salvation of all men is according to the WILL OF GOD; (1 Tim. ii. 4.) and this fact surely is of great weight in its favour; for although Arminians pretend that the *human*, and not the *divine* will, is supreme in this case, the scriptures are far from countenancing such an idea, but, on the contrary, teach that God “worketh all things after the counsel of his *own* will.” (Eph. i. 11.) And even in the business of regeneration they make his will to be the sovereign cause. “Of his *own* will begat he us by the word of truth;” (Jam. i. 18.) “which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” (John i. 3.) And yet we are charitably informed, that if we fail of being the subjects of this divine work, we shall be doomed to ceaseless perdition! Very rational! The will of God in the matter of man’s salvation is negatively as well as affirmatively expressed; and if any are finally lost, it is clear that the will of Jehovah will be frustrated.

But is this probable? Is it possible? When the will of God is formed in regard to any object, he appoints the means, and, of course, the *adequate* means, for bringing it about. Christ was appointed to this very end. “For I came down from heaven,” saith he, “not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me; and this is the Father’s will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.” (John vi. 38, 39.) If none that were given to Christ shall be so lost as not to be recovered at length, it behooves us to inquire, How many were included in that gift? Answer. “The Father loveth the Son, and hath given *all things* into his hands.” (John iii. 35.) “Whom he hath appointed heir of *all things*.” (Heb. i. 2.) “All things that the Father hath are mine.” (John xvi. 15.) Here, then, we have the business of Christ clearly revealed. Was Christ sufficiently empowered to fulfil this object? The following facts leave us no grounds for doubt on this point. First, The Father

delegated to him all power in heaven and in earth. (Mat. xxviii. 18.) Second, The keys of hell and of death were committed to his hands. (Rev. i. 10.) Third, He commands us to *pray* for this object. (Mat. vi. 10.) And we must have a better opinion of his wisdom than to suppose, that he would sanction our praying for an event which he knew *would never come to pass*, “for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.” (Rom. xiv. 23.) Fourth, It seems scarcely probable that Jesus would commence an undertaking without a pre-assurance of his ability to complete it, and thus offend against the moral of his own parable, concerning a man who began to build without being able to finish; (Luke xiv. 29, 30.) for that he undertook the redemption of the world is certain. Will he fail from a neglect to count the cost? Fifth, We have positive assurance that “the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand,” that “he shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied;” (Isa. liii. 10, 11.) which can be conceived to mean nothing less than that he will fully accomplish the object of his mission and death. If Christ “tasted death for every man,” (Heb. ii. 9.) and yet millions shall be finally lost, will he be *satisfied*? Finally, Paul assures us, that Christ “must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet;” (1 Cor. xv. 25.) and by all enemies is clearly meant, all those things that are inimical to man’s purity and allegiance to God; sin, death, the devil, hell, &c. that God may be all in all.

It may be said—“But sinners are so *perverse*, their wills so *stubborn*, so much *opposed* to God, that their redemption is utterly hopeless, and even impossible.” Reader, perhaps your own case may constitute a refutation of this objection. Was not your heart once thus *perverse*? *obstinate*? *opposed to God*? And if so, cannot the same grace that overcame its enmity equally overcome that of others? To remove these barriers to our union to God was the very end of Christ’s mission and death. We can scarcely suppose him to have been so short-sighted as not to foresee the obstacles to be overcome. This, indeed, would be neglecting to count the cost! My dear sir, look what your objection amounts to. Our hearts are hardened in sin; Christ came to soften them, but he fails—why? Because they are so hard! Our wills are opposed to God; Christ came to subdue them, but he fails—why? Because they are so opposed! Methinks he should

have seen the whole difficulty of the case before he undertook it; and either not have undertaken at all, or else have prepared himself in proportion to the resistance which he knew he should meet with. Reader, this will really not do; the grace of God, you believe, was sufficient for Manasseh, for the dying thief, for Saul of Tarsus, for the Philippian jailor, and think you there is any case beyond its reach? What said Christ himself concerning Mary Magdalene? That they love *most* to whom *most* is forgiven. (Luke vii. 47.) Still, however, as Paul clearly shows, (Rom. vi.) we must not "sin, that grace may abound." The great error which perplexeth you, reader, is, that you limit the grace of God by the span of human life, and suppose this little world to be the sole theatre of its operations; whereas it is in fact commensurate with the breadth of his dominions, and as sin aboundeth, that infinite grace aboundeth much more. (Rom. v. 20.) When, therefore, we shall have measured the height, and depth, and length, and breadth, of Being, then shall we know the measure of almighty grace.

SECOND. The doctrine of Universal Salvation is according to the PURPOSE AND PLEASURE OF GOD: (Eph. i. 9, 10.) Few are disposed to deny that the divine *pleasure* favours this great object, but very many doubt its ultimate accomplishment nevertheless; but how speaketh the scripture upon this point? "I am the Lord, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying—My counsel shall stand, and I will do ALL my pleasure." (Isaiah xli. 10.) Now the gathering "together in one," (or *re-heading*, as it may be rendered,) "all things in Christ," whether they be "things on earth or things in heaven," is said in the text to be "according to his good *pleasure* which he hath *purposed* in himself." Professor Stewart, of Andover, who is high authority in matters of biblical criticism, affirms, that "things in earth and things in heaven," is a Hebrew periphrasis for "the whole intelligent universe;" now if this be so, the pleasure and purpose of God respects the eventual uniting together of a universe of intelligences, through his Son Jesus Christ, and I think it extremely probable that Paul alludes to the same important event, when he represents "the whole creation" as groaning and travailing in pain, together with those

who were already in Christ, “waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.” Observe; not our *bodies*, but our *body*, i. e. the whole mass, or aggregated family. The idea is certainly a beautiful one, that the redemption of *a part* cannot be considered as complete until the redemption of *the whole* is so; for are we not members one of another? And if one member suffer, doth not the whole body suffer with it? Why else do angels themselves sympathise with the dwellers upon earth, and rejoice as each sinner is added to the company of the redeemed? I pity the man whose heart is so narrow, and whose christian philosophy is so circumscribed, that he can anticipate a futurity of perfect bliss for himself, at the same time that he thinks that millions, flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone, will scream in ceaseless fire!

To deny that from the beginning God had a purpose regarding man’s ultimate destiny, is to charge him with *folly*, for none but an idiot will work without a definite purpose. To say that his purpose respected the final happiness of but *a part*, is to charge him with *cruelty*. To say it respected the ultimate happiness of all, and yet that all will not be ultimately happy, is to represent him as *impotent*. Now the scriptures represent his purposes as *eternal*; (Eph. iii. 11.) and they teach us that our salvation in a future state is to be, not in accordance with our works or merits, but according to his own purpose and grace, which were given us in Christ Jesus *before the world began*.” (2 Tim. i. 9.)

It will here be objected, that “inasmuch as God has no pleasure in sin, and yet, contrary to his approval, it exists, and has existed for centuries, what assurance have we that his pleasure will be fulfilled in a future any more than in the present state?” I admit this to be the most formidable objection which can arise in this inquiry, and although I have more than once anticipated it in my former pages, yet, as this seems its proper place, I now again bring it in directly—the reader will at least not suspect me of wishing to keep it out of view. That God has no pleasure in sin for *its own sake*, is clear, for it is opposed to his nature. That he does not approve of it *as an ultimate object*, is also clear, for it entails misery, and infinite benevolence did not create for such an end; but that God *does* will its existence, for the present, and with reference to some future purpose of goodness, it were the

essence of folly to deny, for otherwise it would not be. When a father corrects a child, has he pleasure in the *pain* he inflicts? No. Why then does he inflict it? Because he approves the *end* it is designed to bring about. Did God approve of the betrayal, denial, and murder of his son, *on their own account*? No. Nevertheless, it is clear from the scripture, that he *appointed* these events; and to what end? A world's redemption. Now would not the philosophy have been weak and hobbling in the extreme, which in Christ's day would have argued, "that inasmuch as God's pleasure had been violated in the matter of his son's death, that therefore it might to all eternity be so violated, and all his purposes respecting his rising again, and ascending to glory, be forever baffled?" You must see the weakness of such reasoning in that case; why not then in regard to the case before us? The fact that God's will, pleasure, and purpose, are in favour of the ultimate extinction of sin and redemption of mankind, warrants the conclusion that these objects will in due time be effected; for the apostle does not affirm that God wills such a consummation at the present, but "in the dispensation of the fulness of times."

THIRD. This doctrine is in agreement with THE PROMISE OF GOD. (Gen. iii. 15. Acts iii. 25. Ibid. 21. Gal. iii. 8. Titus 1, 2, etc.) We are often told, I know, that the promises of God respecting future blessings are exclusively applicable to the *righteous*; to those who have been born again, &c. but such is not the fact; for when Peter was preaching to the murderers of Jesus, and shortly subsequent to the wicked transaction, he told them, "Ye are the children of the prophets, *and of the covenant* which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, In thee shall all nations be blessed." (Acts iii. 25.) If the murderers of the saviour were the legitimate heirs of this promise, can any good reason be assigned why any are not so? When God is represented as saying, in regard to the Jewish people, "For this is my covenant with them *when I shall take away their sins*," (Rom. xi. 27.) are we to understand the promise as applicable to those only whose sins were already removed? "All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee." (Psl. xxii. 27.) This, surely, is not subject to the limitation above noticed! Not only all the *nations* are here embraced, but all the



*kindreds of the nations.* "All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord, and shall glorify thy name. (Psl. lxxxvi. 9.) If there are any nations whom God hath not made, they, to be sure, are not included in this promise. "Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain; and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." (Isaiah xl. 5, 6.) This passage cannot (as some pretend), refer to the millennium, for the state of things signified by that word, it is supposed, will be gradually and progressively effected; but here we have the assurance of a *simultaneous* discovery of the divine glory on the part of all mankind, "all flesh shall see it *together*." Again, the same prophet saith, "And in this mountain will the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined; and he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast upon all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory, and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces, and the rebuke of his people will he take away from off all the earth, for the Lord hath spoken it." (Isaiah xxv. 6, 7, 8.) To whatever event the prophet may have looked, it is certain that Paul understood the language as appropriate to the era of the resurrection, for while writing upon that theme, he says, "And *then* shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." (1 Cor. xv. 24.) And, indeed, to what other time or circumstance will the language intelligibly apply? The apostle conceived that the morning of the resurrection would be one of unclouded glory, the opening of a day which should never give place to night, an era of universal rejoicing and triumph. Who, in his description, can find one word to countenance the horrible idea, that the bursts of rapture, the extatic swells of praise, shall be blended with the despairing groans of full three-fourths of a world?

From the following passage, I have often thought the revelator must have had in his eye the promise of God to Abraham; and if so, he certainly understood it in the widest sense of which the language is susceptible. "After this I beheld, and lo, a great

multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God who sitteth upon the throne, and to the lamb." (Rev. vii. 9, 10.) Suppose we limit this great, this innumerable multitude, to a *part only* of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues; even then it would form a circumstance against the doctrine of endless suffering; for it is certain that, if that theory be true, there must be many nations and kindreds out of which no part could be saved. For example, all that were involved in the deluge; and since, the people of Sodom, Gomorrha, Tyre, Sidon, Chorazin, Bethsaida, Capernaum, &c. beside the numerous tribes that have perished from the earth in a condition of moral darkness and idolatry; whereas the multitude John saw was composed of ALL nations, kindreds, peoples and tongues. Stronger phraseology could scarcely be framed for expressing the entire human family. If, however, stronger language for the purpose can be found, we have it from the same writer, and upon the same subject, "And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them,\* heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth on the throne, and to the lamb for ever and ever." (Ibid. v. 13.) Here then we have the Psalmist's exhortation reduced to practice, "Let every thing which hath breath praise the Lord." (Psl. cl. 6.) What scene could be more fitting for the winding up of earth's affairs? What commentary upon the text "God saw all things that he had made, and behold they were very good," could be more beautiful? Does not such an issue justify the angelic rejoicings at the birth-day of time? When the morning stars sung together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." (Job xxx. 7.) A foresight of such a consummation might well cause all the arches of eternity to echo and re-echo with rejoicing. And when infinite love creates, what rational being can doubt, that such will be the result?

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\* Ah! but it does not include those that are in hell." Perhaps not. Let me see. Are you quite sure that hell is not "under the earth?" I pretend to no accurate knowledge with regard to its *locale*, but if the christian hell be the *ha-des* of the heathen poets, which I shrewdly suspect, then must it come within the range of the above passage.

FOURTH. The theory of universal salvation is in accordance with the OATH OF GOD. "Look unto me and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by myself, the word has gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear. Surely shall say [I omit the words added by the translators] in the Lord have I righteousness and strength. Even to him shall come; and they that are incensed against him shall be ashamed. In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified. and shall glory." (Isaiah xlv. 22—25.) This is very absolute and very unequivocal; it expresses not merely the *fact* of the ultimate salvation of all, but also the *nature* of that salvation; which will consist in their being clothed with divine strength and righteousness; and this indeed constitutes the essence of gospel salvation: for the removal of moral beings from one to another of the different worlds in the universe (however agreeable the exchange in a physical point of view) can make but little difference in the enjoyment of those beings, except their moral condition be suited to it. Salvation *from* sin, therefore, not *in* it, is that for which we contend; when every individual shall be able to say, "In the Lord have I righteousness and strength;" there will be no sinners in existence, and if no sinners, no moral suffering.

The great apostle has given us the above prediction in a version somewhat different, but which diminishes nought of its universality. "Wherefore also God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Phil. ii. 9, 10, 11.) I know of but one scriptural way of access to God, and Christ is that way. "No man," saith he, "cometh to the Father but by me." (John xiv. 6.) Our opponents tell us there is no change after death; and it is certain that infants, and the hundreds of thousands who yearly pass from time ignorant of the gospel, do not in this life come to God by that only way. What ground of assurance have we, then—what *scriptural* ground, that these shall be saved? None whatever, if the doctrine of endless misery be true! Paul, however, removes the difficulty

satisfactorily; he shows us that the time will come when every knee shall bow in allegiance to God, and every tongue so confess Christ as that God shall be glorified. It would not be to God's glory, surely, to extort (as our opponents affirm he will) an involuntary confession from finite creatures. Omnipotence glorified by forcing an acknowledgement from worms! Yet such is the meager and grovelling view which some seem to entertain on this head.

FIFTH. God is expressly called "THE SAVIOUR OF ALL MEN." (1 Tim. iv. 10.) In what sense can he be consistently so called, except in a final sense? All surely are not saved *now*; they are not saved from sin, suffering, death—nor, if the doctrine of ceaseless suffering be true, from hell, for thousands are hourly descending thither. I am aware that it is assumed by some that he is the saviour of all men merely by having placed them in a *salvable state*: but then I also know that this is sheer nonsense; for if they had ever been *out of* a salvable condition, they could never have been put *into* it. Would a sensible physician talk of putting an incurable patient into a curable state? Men were either always salvable, or they were not; if they were not, they could not be *made* so; if they were, they did not *require* to be made so.

But what is meant by God being the saviour "*especially of them that believe*?" Whatever it may mean, it certainly does not that he is their saviour only, for he is also "the saviour of *all men*." If I save ten, out of a score of persons, from a burning house, or any other danger, am I warranted in calling myself the saviour of the score? I can surely not be considered the saviour of the portion that perished! And although I had made great exertions for the rescue of the whole, still I was in fact but the deliverer of those who by my means were actually delivered. The true meaning, however, of God being called "the saviour of all men, especially of them that believe," is, that the latter class are saved in the *present* life, while the former are not—the latter *are entered* into rest, (Heb. iv. 3.) but unbelievers are yet in the wilderness of sin and consequent trouble—the latter class *are* justified by faith, and *have* peace with God, (Rom. v. 1.) but unbelievers are "without God, and without hope in the world"—the latter class *are quickened* from a death in trespasses and sin (Eph. ii. 1.)

but unbelievers are still in death and condemnation. Here then is the *special* salvation, in contradistinction from that which is *common* to all, or to which mankind are destined in common.

It will not do for the Calvinist to seek a subterfuge here in the assumption, that *all* does not mean *all*; for, however such plea may avail him in some instances, it cannot in this; nor, indeed, in scarcely any where salvation is concerned, which shall be made sufficiently evident. "And he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." (1 John ii. 2.) Here a part is spoken of in distinction from the whole, and both the whole and the part are embraced in the propitiation treated of. How, then, can any be endlessly damned for those sins for which Christ has propitiated? It will perhaps be assumed that "these are our *original* sins only." It is easy making assumptions, but those who thus assume must be greatly indebted to our good grace if we allow it; for there is not in the scripture one particle of warrant for it, either direct or implied. "Thou hast put *all things* in subjection under his feet, for in that he put all things in subjection under him, he left *nothing* that is not put under him." (Heb. ii. 8.) Here *all things* are contrasted with *no thing*. What language could be more clearly universal in its signification? And their being put in subjection under Christ cannot mean merely that his power over them is established, for that is the case at present; (all power is given unto him in heaven and in earth. Matt. xxviii. 18.); it implies a subjection of a different kind—a *moral* subjection—reconciliation—allegiance.

"But," says an objector, "there must be some mistake here, for in looking over the world we find very many who both live and die without manifesting any subjection to Christ—how then can it be that all are put under him, in the sense for which you contend?" Now it so happens, that the apostle has anticipated this very objection. "But now," saith he, "we see not *yet* all things put under him—But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." (ibid.) The fact, then, it seems, of Christ having died for all, was considered by the writer a sufficient guarantee, that the universal subjection which it was designed to effect, shall infallibly be brought about.

In the following text, the absolute sense which the apostle means to convey by the word *all*, is, if possible, still more explicitly established. "For the love of Christ constraineth us because we thus judge, that if one *died for all*, then *all were dead*—and that he died for all." (2 Cor. v. 14.) According to the argument here, if one *did not* die for all, then *all were not* dead—if he died for a part only, then that part only were dead; but "*he died for all.*"

The same writer, in his letter to Timothy, exhorts that besides praying to God for kings, and others in authority, "that supplications, prayers, and giving of thanks, be made unto God for *all* men." Will any think of limiting the word *all* in this instance? The object of so praying for all is stated to be, "that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our saviour, who will have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator betwixt God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." (1 Tim. ii. 1—8.) The same *all* for whom it is our duty to pray, are also subjects for whom Christ died, and mediates; and whom God will have to be saved. Mark, the *truth* is here represented as *agreeing* with the *salvation* of all—and, of course, as *disagreeing* with the ultimate *damnation* of any—for if any portion of the human race is to be finally lost, a knowledge of the truth would not consist with the salvation of that portion—as that truth could only teach them that they were to be damned. The object of God's will in that case would be an impossibility, (and it does not consist with infinite wisdom to will impossibilities,) for only that part of mankind could be saved by coming to a knowledge of the truth, with whose salvation that truth agreed.

It may here be said that the command to pray for all, may not have been meant in an universal sense, for Christ expressly says, on one occasion, "I pray not for the world." True, Christ was then praying particularly for his apostles, that they might be kept together, and guarded against the allurements of a wicked world. But read on, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." Here you perceive the petition takes a wider compass. Proceed farther, "that

*the world may believe* that thou hast sent me," and again, "*that the world may know* that thou hast sent me." (John xvii. 9—23.) We find, then, that the saviour does include all men in his prayer; and, what think you, reader, will the object of that prayer ever be fulfilled?

Let us go next to those passages in which the number to be saved, is made to correspond to the number that have sinned. "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Well, what further concerning those all? "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." (Rom. iii. 23, 24.) "For as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so, by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." (ibid. v. 18.) It is immediately added, "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." (ibid. 19.) The same many that were made sinners *shall*—not *may be*—*perhaps*, or *perchance*—but shall be made righteous. Say if you please this many means but a part. Well, then a part became sinners, and that part shall be made righteous, and the part which did not become sinners of course does not need to be made righteous, so that we are brought to the same result at last—*all shall be made righteous*—God's oath, as before shown, is pledged for it—and the prayers of Christ, and of every benevolent heart, are centered on it. But a remark touching that word *many*; it does not properly represent the Greek term, which should have been rendered *the mass*, or *the multitude*, as is evident both from what goes before and follows; for Paul is laboring to show that the provision of divine grace is commensurate with the demand for it, and even more than commensurate, for the divine determination was, that man might be fully aware of his dependence and sinfulness, and to this end the law was given to gauge the depth of his guilt, and throw him upon the mercy of God for deliverance; hence saith the apostle, "Moreover the law entered that the offence might abound, but where sin abounded grace did much more abound, that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." (ibid. 20, 21.) "God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all." (ibid. xi. 32.) "For as *in Adam* all die, even

so *in Christ* shall all be made alive." (1 Cor. xv. 22.) The word Adam here doubtless means, the fleshly nature we possess from him, in which nature we all die. Christ stands for the heavenly nature, and in it we shall all be made alive. "And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." (Ibid. 49.) From all these instances it must be manifest, that the word all, when applied to man's salvation, requires to be understood in its strict and absolute sense, and hence, as God is called "the saviour of all men," the entire race must ultimately be saved.

SIXTH. Christ is called "the saviour of the world." (John iv. 42.) The only saviour of men, in a *supreme* sense, is Jehovah himself; Christ is such only in an *instrumental* sense. "Him hath God *exalted* to be a prince and a saviour." (Acts v. 31.) "We believe, and do testify, that the Father sent the Son to be the saviour of the world." (1 John iv. 14.) And if the world at the last is not saved, it is clear that Christ will have failed of carrying into effect the object of his mission; his own testimony informs us, that this was his main business. "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." (John iii. 17.) And again, he saith, "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me, And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all that he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. (Ibid. vi. 38, 39.) In another place, he speaks of having lost one, "the son of perdition," from among the number of the apostles; but he here declares, that *nothing* is to be so lost as not to be at length recovered.

It behooves us then to inquire, what is the extent of the gift from the Father to the Son? Let the scriptures answer. "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hands." (John iii. 25.) "Whom he hath made heir of all things." (Heb. i. 2.) "All that the Father hath are mine." (John xvi. 15.) And he is not to lose any so given him, but that he shall raise them up again at the last day. God would hardly, methinks, have committed all things to the hands of Christ with a foresight that they would be unsafe in his custody! And, more especially, as he committed them to him with the express design that he should



save them! Now, if the theory of endless suffering be true, at the time God gave all things to Christ he knew that a large portion of them would become the property of the devil, and that the devil could never be made to relinquish his possession of them. A singular gift, truly!

“Ah! but the world is so sinful; how can Christ save it?” Answer. He “*taketh away* the sin of the world.” (John i. 29.) “But suppose they will not come to him—how then? Christ shall answer, “And I, when I shall be lifted up from the earth, *will draw all men unto me.*” (John xii. 32.) “What! whether they repent, or are reconciled to God, or not?” No. “It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell, and (having made peace by the blood of the cross) by him to reconcile all things unto himself, by him, I say, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven.” (Col. i. 19, 20.) And, moreover, Christ is exalted to *give* repentance and remission of sin.” (Acts v. 31.) Peter told not the Jews that Christ would bless them *in* their iniquities, but “by turning away every one of you *from* your iniquities.” (Acts iii. 26.)

Some of the allegories of the saviour are rich in instruction upon this head; for example, A man lost one sheep out of a flock of a hundred; not willing to lose even that one, “he left the ninety and nine in the wilderness,” and started in pursuit of the straggler; “he sought it;” how long? “until he had found it.” Well, having found it, how did he proceed? Did he say, “Well, I have done my part; I have been at the pains to seek you, and now, you are a *free agent*, I will not compel you to return, but you may come if you choose, or otherwise you may stay where you are and perish?” No, the shepherd acted in no such wise as that; the lost one, by long rambling, had doubtless become weak and diseased, and quite unable to return of itself, (as, by our opponents’ confession, is also the case with man,) so the kind-hearted shepherd took it upon his shoulders and carried it home, rejoicing at his recovery of his lost property. And the moral of this beautiful parable is, that among the angels of bliss there is more joy in the contemplation of one sinner saved, than in that of ninety and nine unfallen beings who had never by wandering excited their sympathies. All which is as natural as beautiful.

If angels are thus affected by what transpires on earth, think

you that they have no sympathies for those who groan in hell? And if the heart of the saviour was so affected at the grave of a friend that he wept, and at the prospect of temporal overthrow to a city, that he broke into passionate lamentation, will he be altogether unaffected by the utter and hopeless ruin of three-fourths of a world, for whose redemption he gave his life? We, at least, have inspired assurance, that he is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." (Heb. xiii. 8.)

SEVENTH. The consideration of particular cases, as they are disposed of in the scriptures, makes decidedly in favour of the Universalist faith. The case of the Sodomites, for example, dark as it looks under some of its aspects, is nevertheless put before us in the scriptures in a light which warrants the belief of its ultimately salutary termination. The same is true with regard to the Jews; but let us look at them separately.

The Sodomites, with the people of Gomorrha, were destroyed with fire from heaven; and are said in Jude, verse 7th, to be "set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire;" from which many are led to the supposition that their suffering must be unceasing; but this is a mistake, or the bible is contradictory, for 1st, Jeremiah the prophet avers that the temporal calamities of the Jews, in his day, constituted a heavier retribution than what had befallen the Sodomites, which surely could not be if that of the latter were unending in hell. I will give you his language. "For the punishment of the iniquity of the daughter of my people, is *greater* than the punishment of the sin of Sodom, that was overthrown as in a moment, and *no hand stayed on her.*" (Lam. iv. 6.) Do you believe this? If so, you cannot at the same time believe that the punishment of the latter is unceasing. 2nd. See what God says by another prophet. He declares Jerusalem's sins to be greater than those of Sodom; (Eze. xvi. 48, 49.) and if so, was it not just that her punishment should be greater? He compares Jerusalem to a woman, whose elder sister is Samaria and the towns adjacent; and whose younger sister is Sodom and her neighbouring towns. (Ibid. 45, 46.) He then says, "When I shall bring again their captivity, the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, and the captivity of Samaria and her daughters, then will I bring again thy captivity in the midst of them." (verse 53.) "When thy sisters, Sodom and her

daughters, shall return to their former state, and Samaria and her daughters shall return to their former state, then thou and thy daughters shall return to your former estate." (57.) "Nevertheless," he concludes, "I will remember thy covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant; then thou shalt remember thy ways and be ashamed, when thou shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder and thy younger, and I will give them unto thee for daughters, but not by thy covenant; and I will establish my covenant with thee, and thou shalt know that I am the Lord." (60, 61, 62.) Thus much for the case of Sodom; and to me, it is strange beyond expression, that persons professing a belief in the bible, should in the face of such testimony maintain that the inhabitants of that and its neighboring cities, (containing, without doubt, human beings of every age, from hoary hairs to lisping infancy,) were doomed to interminable perdition!

Now for the Jews. Was Paul a believer in their ultimate salvation? What, then, means the anxiety expressed in the following language? "Brethren, my heart's desire, and prayer to God for Israel, is that they might be saved." (Rom. x. 1.) And the following is even more expressive of anxiety: "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart, for I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen, according to the flesh." (Ibid. ix. 1, 2, 3.) This language, dear reader, is easily accounted for without resolving it into the fears he entertained for their fate beyond the grave; for, on that head, as shall be shown, he had no fears whatever. But they were in darkness; in spiritual as well as civil bondage; they had filled up their measure of wickedness, heavy temporal judgments hung over them, the loss of their political and ecclesiastical existence, war, famine, pestilence, captivity, dispersion amongst all nations, &c. Is it to be wondered at that, in view of these calamities, the apostle's heart should have been affected in the manner described? I trow not.

But as to their final destiny beyond death, it is clearly settled by the pen of inspiration. Isaiah says, "In the Lord shall *all the seed of Israel* be justified, and shall glory." (Isa. xlv. 25.) The same prophet has recorded God's promise to that people, and Paul

has quoted it entire : "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people, and they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord, for all shall know me from the least unto the greatest ; for I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." (Heb. viii. 10, 11, 12.) See also what is said in Romans, chapter 11th : The blindness of Israel is to continue until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in, "And so *all Israel shall be saved*, as it is written, there shall come out of Zion the deliverer, who shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob, for this is my covenant unto them when I shall take away their sins ; as concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but as concerning election they are beloved for the fathers' sake. For as ye in times past have not believed God, but have now obtained mercy through their unbelief, even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also might obtain mercy ; for God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all." (Rom. xi. 26—32.)

From the above testimony it must be exceedingly evident that Paul has no anxieties about the *ultimate* destiny of his nation ; but he was, nevertheless, most earnestly solicitous for their *present* salvation ; and surely there is nothing strange nor singular in the fact of his solicitude. As a universalist minister, I certainly have no fears about the ultimate destiny of the world : nevertheless, I am willing to go as far, forego as much, and endure as much, to effect the present deliverance of the human race from ignorance, superstition, and the bondage of guilt, and to bring them to the enjoyment of gospel blessedness, as is any one who conceives their transmundane state to depend on such deliverance.

"But all are not Israel that are of Israel," the quibbler will here say, "and therefore, we need not understand these promises as referring to the whole Jewish nation." True ; both Isaac, and Ishmael, were *of* Israel, that is, they were both children of Abraham ; but God's decree was, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called," and Ishmael, therefore, instead of being numbered with Isreal, became the head of another, and distinct people. Can any body

tell me what in the world this circumstance has to do with the case before us? That Paul was not speaking of Israel in any such restricted sense is exceedingly obvious. "All Israel shall be saved," the same Israel that were yet in their sins, that "were blinded," that were "enemies to the gospel," that were all "concluded in unbelief." And this is to be effected when "the fullness of the gentiles be come in." The whole race of man, in those days, were included in those two classes; and consequently the whole Jewish people, with the fullness of the gentiles, constituted the sum of the entire human family.

Mercy, then, mercy to every individual, forms the ground of all the divine dispensations in regard to man, whether he lifteth up, or casteth down; blinds, or enlightens; elects or reprobates: the ultimate end is mercy, mercy to each, mercy to all. "O the depth of the riches, both of the knowledge and wisdom of God, how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? or who hath first given unto him and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things. To whom be glory for ever, amen."

As God is the first beginning, so shall he also be the last end, of all things; all have come from him, so all shall eventually revert to him. You have seen, reader, a tiny rivulet in the far-off wilderness, so small as scarcely to make a murmur as it rippled over the pebbles in its channel, and clear, oh, how clear! how limpid! Whither doth it journey? Would you guess to the ocean, some hundreds, perhaps thousands of miles distant? You know that such is its destination, and why? because the ocean is its native home, its birth place, it first emigrated from thence to the clouds, in the form of mist, from thence it was precipitated to terra-firma, in the form of rain; and it hid itself awhile, seeking a retreat from the stormy world, in subterranean cavities; but they proved cold and comfortless hiding places, and it soon again sought the light in the shape of springs, and is hastening home as fast as it can. The story of this rivulet bears some resemblance to our own; we emanated from God, the infinite ocean of existence, he is the "Father of our spirits," and how widely soever we may since have roamed, and whatever the mutations through which

we may have passed, still kindred substances have a mutual attraction for each other; the liberated spark will seek the sun, and waters unconfined will seek the ocean: in like manner, when the body returns to the dust whence it came, "the spirit shall return to the God that gave it." "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things. To whom be glory for ever, amen."

EIGHTH. Universal salvation is also evident from the fact, that *sin, death, hell, the devil, works of the devil, error, &c.*, are to be destroyed; for how can misery be, after all its elements are extinct? With respect to *sin*, as has been shown already, it cannot forever exist in opposition to divine holiness; David prays, "O, let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end," (Psl. vii. 9.) and such must surely be the desire of every righteous person, and the more so in proportion as he is righteous; we, however, are desirous that it should cease at once, and immediately, because we cannot see how God can overrule it for good results; but this, God in his own time will show. The prophet Daniel, associates with the anointing of Messiah, the designs of God "to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sin, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in an everlasting righteousness;" (Dan. ix. 24.) and, indeed, this is the uniform testimony with respect to the object of God in the gift of his son; "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." (2 Cor. v. 19.) But in order to a reconciliation, sin must be removed.

That *death* is to be abolished, several scriptures and considerations go to prove. It is customary for the inspired penmen to consider, as already done, whatsoever Christ came to do; because they regarded his power as adequate to the full accomplishment of the work assigned him: hence, Paul speaks of him as having "*abolished death*, and brought life and immortality to light by the gospel." (2 Tim. 1. 10.) The same writer affirms, that "the last enemy *shall be destroyed*, DEATH." (1 Cor. xv. 26.) I leave out of this text the two spurious words, as they are not necessary to, but rather tend to weaken its sense. "Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." (ibid.) After the *last* enemy is destroyed, there will of course be none remaining, and the declaration that this shall take place is absolute. It is easy seeing then, that the assumption that "eternal life implies eternal death," is falla-

cious ; for, to leave out of view the scripture testimony to the controversy, it is refutable on logical ground alone. If eternal life imply eternal death in a *prospective* sense, it also must in a *retrospective* ; if, because life always *shall be*, death must always be also ; then it follows that as life always *has been*, death also must always *have been* ; but when life resided in God alone, in whom did death reside ? Answer that, ye who contend for death's eternity, on the ground that life is eternal. Life has its well-spring in the nature of Jehovah ; let the source be dried up, and the empire of death will be universal. Death results from mortal constitutions ; when these have ceased, death must cease of course, and be "swallowed up in victory."

*Hell* is fated to the same end. God says by the prophet, "I will ransom them from the power of *Sheol*, (grave or hell) I will redeem them from death. O death, I will be thy plagues. O *Sheol*, I will be thy destruction." (Hosea xiii. 14.) John's description, (highly figurative, unquestionably,) must refer to the same event. "And death and *Hades* were cast into the lake of fire, *this is the second death*." (Rev. xx. 16.) Here the destruction of death itself, is termed the second death. As saith the Poet,

"And pains, and groans, and griefs, and fears,  
And death itself shall die."

Paul broadly intimates the destruction of *Hades*, in the triumphant challenge, "O *Hades*, where is thy victory?" (1 Cor. xxvi.) It were victory enough to retain within its dark domain, unnumbered myriads of God's family ; and if such is indeed to prove the case, the challenge of the apostle could, on the part of *Hades*, be triumphantly responded to. But this shall not prove the case, for God's word has gone out for its destruction, and the decree is past revocation, for saith God, "Repentance shall be hid from mine eyes." Happy, glorious event ! "O, thou enemy, destructions shall come to a perpetual end." Here, indeed, will be a triumph worthy of almighty grace, a triumph of triumphs ! "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them." (Psl. lxxviii. 18.) O, *Hades* ! thy grim and direful reign must close, when almighty love comes to resume the sceptre of universal empire, and little

as the prospect of thy final discomfiture may be relished by those who fancy that to them are entrusted the keys of thy dreary portals, yet come it must at last, and thy grim associate, death, shall share in thine overthrow, as he shared in thy triumphs.

“ Break down, ye separating hills,  
Let sin and death remove ;  
Tis love that drives my chariot wheels,  
And death must yield to love.”

Alike doom awaits the *devil*, (which means an adversary, *any* adversary,) “ Forasmuch, then, as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death, he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is *the devil*, and deliver them who through the fear of death, were all their life-time subject to bondage.” (Heb. ii. 14—15) The devil, poor fellow ! has had a hard fortune from the beginning ; but here is a long good night to his troubles.

*The works of the devil* are also among the subjects doomed to eventual extinction. “ For this purpose the son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.” (1 John iii. 8.) That *sin* is a work of the devil, introduced by his instrumentality, will not be disputed ; neither will it be doubted that misery of all kinds flows from sin. (I mean that by our opponents this will not be doubted—we believe that there is much misery which is not consequent of sin.) If, then, the works of the devil shall experience the fate decreed for them, it follows that all the misery consequent of sin shall cease. Error also is ascribed to the devil, (for he is called the father of lies, (John viii. 44.) and false doctrines, under the figure of tares, are called “ the children of the wicked one,” “ the enemy that sowed them is the devil,” (Mat. xiii. 39.) both the devil and his works are not infrequently *personified* in the scriptures,) error, therefore, must also in due time cease : the same thing is plainly intimated in the several predictions afore-quoted, that God will remove the face of the covering cast upon all people, and the veil spread over all nations, that all shall be brought to know the Lord, and to confess Christ to the glory of God the Father ; then shall tears be wiped from all faces, and the divine glory be displayed to an universe of intelligences.

NINTH. The ultimate salvation of all men is obviously infer-



able from numerous other scripture texts and circumstances. For example: the anger of God is alluded to as existing but for *a moment*; (Psl. xxx. 5. Isaiah liv. 8.) but, in full fifty instances, his mercy is said to endure *forever*, (1 Chro. xvi. 34. 2 Chro. v. 13. xvii. 3, 6. xx. 29. Psl. cvi. 1. cvii. 1. cxviii. 1, 2, 3. cxxxvi. 1, 2, 3, etc.) but according to the opponent system this antithesis is false! for in that case his anger endureth as long as his mercy: yea, more, for as regards the subjects of endless misery, the *reverse* of the antithesis is the fact; God's mercy toward them endureth only during their momentary stay on earth, and then commenceth the reign of his wrath, and it continueth forever!

Strictly speaking there is, there can be, no *anger* in the deity: "he is of one mind, and who can turn him?" But in accommodation to our limited conceptions, the retributive dispensations of his providence are termed his *anger*, because they display the repugnance of his infinitely pure nature to all unholiness; these, however, are ever directed to the sinner's reformation as an ultimate object; they are therefore necessarily temporary, and, as compared with eternity, but for a moment; but the mercy which directs them, endureth, according to the most absolute sense of the word, *forever*, while God himself endureth.

It is positively declared, "For the Lord **WILL NOT** cast off forever, but though he cause grief, yet he will have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies, for he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men." (Lam. iii. 31, 32.) The same prophet also asks the important and self-answering question, "Will he reserve his anger forever? Will he keep it unto the end?" (Jer. iii. 5.) And the negative is boldly and explicitly settled by two other prophets. "For I **WILL NOT** contend forever, **NEITHER WILL I** be always wroth, for the spirits should fail before me, and the souls that I have made." (Isaiah lvii. 16.) "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy; he **WILL NOT** always chide, **NEITHER WILL HE** retain his anger forever." (Psl. ciii. 8, 9.) And still another inquires, "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgressions of the remnant of his heritage? he **RETAINETH NOT** his anger forever, because he delighteth in mercy; he will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities;

and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depth of the sea." (Mic. vii. 18, 19.) In regard to David God saith, and it is to be presumed that he deals with all men upon the same principle, "If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgressions with a rod, and their iniquity with stripes; But my loving-kindness WILL I NOT utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail." (Psl. lxxxix. 30, 21, 32.) If the doctrine of endless misery were but half as explicitly affirmed in the scriptures as it is repeatedly here denied, it could with more show of truth claim our credence under the divine sanction; and it would then seem the height of presumption, to attempt the advocacy of the opposite doctrine of the final salvation of a world. But what can be brought forward in its behalf, which will set aside this repeated and positive evidence of its falsity? And especially when to this are added all the evidences from God's attributes, relations, will, pleasure, promises, purpose, oath, his end in creation, redemption, providence, &c., one would think that to countervail all this, there should be direct testimony, so explicit, and so oft repeated, in various, yet always unequivocal forms, that common sense could not well mistake their purport. And even in that case the bible, by its contradictory testimonies relative to the same point, would nullify its own claims upon our respect and confidence. But how stands the fact? You will see, reader, ere we are done, that this dogma depends for support on some isolated allegories or other disjointed and hyperbolical portions of the scripture! A foundation so flimsy would stand small chance of availing it long, I ween, were it not for the too general ignorance, duplicity, and mystery-loving character of mankind.

TENTH. The same is also inferable from the nature of PRAYER, FAITH, and CHARITY. It has before been shown that we are directed to pray for all men, (1 Tim. ii. 1.) and also to pray in *faith*, because "whatsoever is not of faith is sin;" (Rom. xiv. 23.) to pray in faith for all men would not be proper, nor would it have been enjoined, if it were the fact that in regard to millions it would prove unavailing: the very injunction implies that the object of these petitions shall be finally fulfilled; more especially as they are in accordance with the divine mind, "who will have

all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth." (1 Tim. ii. 4.) Christ has directed us to pray that the will of God should be done, (Mat. vi. 10.) and he himself has set the example of praying for the whole world. (John xvii. 21.) It is to be presumed that he knew whether his prayer would or would not avail: David often broke out into supplication for the whole human family, "Let all the people praise thee, O God, let all the people praise thee!" (Psl. lxvi. 3.) "O let them give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endureth forever," (ibid. xxvii. 5.) and he also prays, "O let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end!" (ibid. vii. 9.) "The Lord heareth the prayers of the righteous," it is said, (Prov. xv. 29.) and it is but reasonable to believe he does, and that he will answer them too, when they accord with his own will, and the example of his son.

All good men pray for the final salvation of the world; oh how fervently do they desire this great object! And yet, strange to say, how averse are many of them to believe that it will ever be brought to pass! They will argue against it, preach against it, write against it, and yet most fervently pray *for it*! And the doctrine which sets forth that their benevolent supplications are heard, and will in due time be fully answered, they denounce as a most gross and dangerous heresy!

**FAITH.** The scriptures intimately connect faith with salvation; but what must faith be in its nature, in order to be saving in its influence? This is a question of greater moment than is generally imagined, for except it give assurance to the subject of his own eventual happiness; yea, and of the eventual happiness of all in whom his affections are interested—it surely cannot savingly affect him: can any system of belief light up my mind with joy and confidence relative to the future world, which fails to assure me of my own future blessedness? And allowing it gives me this, which fails to assure me also of the future blessedness of my parents, my wife and children, my friends, and all in whose welfare my heart concerns itself? Now it is undeniable that neither of the several systems of unending punishment can do this. Supposing, for example, the doctrine of *election* true, can I *certainly* know that myself, and all these other objects of my love, are among the happy number elected to ceaseless bliss? None,

surely, will think of rendering an affirmative answer here. Much less can I be certified on this head, if the notion of *free agency* be true; for on that ground there is no certainty to any body—not only no certainty of ever *getting* to heaven, but also no certainty of *remaining* there in case it is ever reached! Because if some once there were exiled, and driven to hell, (the fallen angels,) and we are to continue free agents, the same may happen again!

If faith give not present certitude of future bliss to its possessor, I can only say that the scriptures have greatly exaggerated its virtues: “There remaineth therefore a rest,” say they, “TO the people of God;” (Heb. iii. 9.) and “we which have believed, DO enter into rest;” (ibid. 3.) they speak of a “peace and joy IN believing;” (Rom. xv. 13.) and they connect with faith a “joy that is unspeakable and full of glory.” (1 Pet. i. 8.) Paul calls faith “The substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen;” (Heb. xi. 7.) precisely the reverse of this definition will express the nature of the belief of endless misery; it is the substance of things not only *not* hoped for, but by every benevolent mind most fervently deprecated; thus near, exactly, and no nearer, does this dreary faith approximate to an identity with the faith of the gospel!

“Faith works by love, and purifies the heart.” (Gal. v. 6.) Does the faith of unending punishment do this? On the contrary, I will prove it to be inconsistent with a due degree of love to mankind. Take a mother who believes this doctrine; she has lost a son who had attained his majority, and who died without a preparation for heaven. Does she suppose that he has been doomed to an eternity of flames? Not she; she will tell you of the mercy of God, and of his plenitude of grace for the salvation of the vilest of offenders; and although she is not warranted by her creed in cherishing the smallest hope for her son on these grounds; still she will persist in discrediting the idea of his final ruin! Why is this? It is because of the love she bears to her offspring. Suppose now that she loved all mankind as well; what then? Why then she would be equally loth to believe that any would be finally lost. Does not this make it manifest that a faith in this dogma is incompatible with true philanthropy? You will rarely find a person of sane mind, who thinks, however profligate he may be, that *he* will be doomed to verify the truth of

this dogma : although his prejudices would be shocked at the idea that no part of mankind are to be endlessly damned ; he is quite sure there will be a great many : but he is not to be included in the number—oh no, not his precious self. He might go so far as to acknowledge, “if I should die in my present state I would without doubt sink to hell ; but then,” quoth he, “I dont expect so to die ; I hope divine grace will some day interpose for my salvation.” If this man loved all as he loves himself, he would find it exceedingly easy to believe that all mankind will be saved ; but the faith of endless-hell torments, we see, does not work by love.

CHARITY, which is but another name for *love*, and which the apostle Paul tells us “never faileth,” (1 Cor. xiii. 8.) though prophecies may fail, and tongues may cease, and knowledge may vanish away, and the earth in the lapse of ages may be resolved into its primary elements, and the stars may grow dim with age, and worlds, and systems of worlds, may be dissolved, and become commingled in primeval confusion ; all this *may* be, but *love never faileth* ; for love is God, and was the first of all things, and must survive the wreck of all things, in case such wreck transpire. As God willeth not the final ruin of any, but, on the contrary, will have all to be saved ; so as we assimilate to the divine nature are we similarly disposed toward the whole of mankind : And here, christian reader, I will appeal to your experience ; let me take your memory back to the period when you were first sensible of the divine influences upon your heart ; you were overwhelmed, you were dissolved in tenderness, you looked around you with new eyes upon all things, and they seemed invested with a charm which they had never previously worn ; love was apparent to your perceptions every where, and seemed to have transmuted all things into its own image and essence ; there was nothing, however mean or contemptible, upon which your heart did not yearn to expatiate itself in kindness ; you could fully sympathise with the desire of the poet,

“O that the world might taste and see  
The riches of his grace ;  
The arms of love which compass me,  
Would all mankind embrace.”

Far were you then from a disposition to limit divine grace to a moiety of the human family ; on the contrary, you felt that that

grace which had reached a case so desperate as yours, was quite able to plunge, in its saving influences, down to the lowest depths of human guilt; for your heart fully endorsed the sentiment breathed forth by the christian poet before-quoted, relative to the divine goodness.

“ Throughout the world its breadth is known,  
Vast as infinity ;  
So vast it never passed by one,  
Or it had passed by me.”

Is it probable, reader, that your conceptions of almighty love were at that time exaggerated?—that they soared beyond its height—went down below its depths—or extended beyond its circumference? No, no, this is not probable, the greater probability is, that your conceptions since have, by the influence of a partial creed, been narrowed into limits quite out of accordance with your christian profession and your former experience.

“ Charity,” saith the great apostle, “ rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;” (1 Cor. xiii. 7.) from which we gather, that whatever love cannot approve, and rejoice in, cannot be true. Love can approve of all things as they are, because it looks forward to what they are to be; it can approve of present evil, with a view to future and greater good; it can smile upon a short night of tears, which is to issue in an ever-enduring day of joy, the brighter for those tears. But can charity rejoice in the endless ruin of intelligent Beings? No; and we therefore infer that the doctrine concerning such an event is false.

ELEVENTH. We may infer the ultimate salvation of all men from the fact, that we are taught by Jesus Christ himself to make the conduct of God toward his enemies, the model of our conduct toward ours. “ But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute. That ye may be the children of your father which is in heaven,” &c. (Mat. v. 44.) What can be conceived more flagrantly opposed to this character of the deity, than that which is ascribed to him by the theory of eternal torments? To imitate God as that doctrine portrays him, we must cherish toward our foes an implacable revenge, a revenge which nothing short of their utter ruin will suffice to extinguish!

Such is the revenge, such the deity of that dark creed ! It is equally easy to love him, as to love the grim vision of Milton's

—————"Molech, horrid king :  
Besmear'd with blood of human sacrifice,  
And parents' tears"————

Does he indeed love his enemies ? How, I pray, is that love evinced ? By continuing them in life ? Yes, that they may thereby sink the deeper in guilt, (for such he certainly knows will be the result,) and draw down upon themselves accumulated ruin ! Such is the love of God ! Such his lenity toward the objects of his wrath ! He has prepared for them a sea of sulphurous fire, and although no good to any creature can arise from it, it shall be their hapless doom.

"There to converse with everlasting groans,  
Unrespited, unpitied, unreprieved,  
Ages of hopeless end."

I put it to the consciences and good sense of my readers, whether a doctrine which thus represents the deity can be true ; and whether the saviour's selection of the divine conduct as an example for ours, was not, in this view of the case, a most inappropriate, and unfortunate selection.

TWELFTH. We may also infer our doctrine from the precepts and the acts of the saviour whilst he sojourned with men : he was the representative of God, and the reflection of his perfections, (Col. 1.) "when ye have seen me," said he, "ye have seen the father," (John xiv. 9.) and what was his treatment of sinners ? Such, exactly, as entitled him to be called their "*friend*," (Mat. xi. 10. Luke vii. 34.) he had "compassion on the ignorant, and them that were out of the way ;" (Heb. v. 2.) even in death he practiced upon the precept he gave to man, by praying for his enemies ; (Luke xxiii. 34.) and he commissioned his disciples after his resurrection, to commence their labors of gospel love amongst his murderers. (Luke xiii. 47. Acts iii. 26.) When Peter inquired of him, "How oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him—until seven times ?" his answer was, "I say not unto thee until seven times, but until seventy times seven." (Mat. xxiii. 22.) That is, forgive as God forgives, *without limitation*.

To the woman taken in adultery he said, "neither do I condemn thee ; go, and sin no more : " (John vii. 3.) from which we

are not to infer, however, that he did not regard the act with a due degree of abhorrence; for he cautioned her against a repetition of it—"sin no more:" all that we can infer, is, that knowing the frailty of our nature, and the temptations with which it is beset, he judged less harshly of, and made more allowance for human conduct, than cynical self-righteous bigots are wont to do. "This man," thought Simon the pharisee, when he saw that Jesus admitted a sinful, conscience-smitten woman, to disburthen her heart in tears shed upon his feet; "is not so good and great a person as he is accounted, or he would not permit a sinner to touch him." Simon had not the least idea that he himself was a sinner: oh, no! he would not submit to the pollution of contact with any one bearing that character. Christ well divined what was passing in his mind, and he read him a lesson of benevolence so simple, and so touching withal; that it must command for its author the love and admiration of mankind through all future time. (Luke vii. 36.) When the multitudes followed him, eager to hear his mild and soothing eloquence, into desert places, and through long fasting became weak with hunger; Christ compassionated them because they were far from their villages, and they might faint on their way thither to get food: and he worked a miracle for their supply on the spot. (Mat. xvi. 9. Mark viii. 9.) Ah! he saw very, very many amongst them, if the theory of an endless hell be true, who after a few brief years should implore his pity from the fiery deeps of ruin, and implore it in vain! How tender, and how delicate, was the manner he adopted toward the transgressing Peter; in order that that rash, but warm-hearted disciple, might be reassured of his favour! (John xxi. 15.) And how condescending was his conduct toward the skeptical Thomas! (ibid. xx. 27.) How enlarged is the benevolence he inculcates in his sermon on the mount! and in the parable of the good Samaritan! (Luke x. 30.) The worst of mankind, he informs us, will salute their *brethren*—will love their *friends*; (the members of a fraternity of *thieves* will do this as it regards each other;) but if we would be God-like we must love our *enemies*, and be kind to those that *hate* us: we must not suffer our fellow feeling to be narrowed by party or by geographical limits; but must aim to emulate him who is "good to all," and whose "tender mercy is over all his works."



Such was Jesus Christ: and those who saw him saw the Father, (John xiv. 9.) for he was the incarnated "image of the invisible God;" (Col. i. 15.) the visible, and tangible mirror of the divine perfections. How can we better acquaint ourselves with the Father's character, and how *a priori*, better form a conclusion as to what he will do in regard to our sinful race, than by attentively considering the precepts and the acts of his son, who was his representative amongst men? "And we beheld his glory," says one, "the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, *full of grace and truth.*" (John i. 14.) Now is not common sense outraged when attempts are made to harmonise with this developement of his character, the doctrine, that God will to all eternity damn seven eighths of his frail and ignorant human offspring? When darkness can be proven a better medium of vision than light; when it can be shown that cold is attributable to the presence of caloric; when the great toe, in the human system, is shown to be the nucleus of the arterial and venous circulation, instead of the heart; when the principle of gravitation is proven to incline heavy bodies to the clouds: when these things can be made to appear, it will then be equally apparent that from the perfections of character exemplified in the teaching and acts of the Saviour, will result a final catastrophe answering to that set forth in the dogma of endless misery.

I will add no more considerations at present, although much more will be adduced in the progress of this work. I flatter myself however, that more is not necessary for the conviction of the candid inquirer: let him but suppose these facts reversed, and then, must he not acknowledge their weight in the scale of the opposite doctrine to be immense? If, for example, it could be urged in behalf of endless misery, that God *wills* it; that it accords with his *purpose, pleasure, promise, and oath*; with the *mission, miracles, and death* of Christ; that it is a legitimate object of *prayer, faith, and charity*; that all the good, in heaven and on earth, *desire* it; that in order to be *like God* we must in our practice conform to the spirit of it: and that *Christ's example* when on earth was in strict accordance with its principles. And if it could be further urged in its favour, that revelation unequivocally teaches that God's *mercy is momentary*, and his *anger eternal*; that he *will* contend forever; that in numerous instances

he *will* utterly take away his loving-kindness, and cease to be gracious: also that *death* will always endure; and *sin*, and *the devil*, and *his works*, and *error*, and *misery* and *hell*: and, furthermore, that God *created* numerous intelligences to the *very end* that they should be ceaselessly miserable; and that any result short of this would be a *disappointment* of his eternal plans. If, I say, all this could be urged in proof of the truth of that doctrine, would you not, reader, deem it the very extremity of folly and presumption in me, or any one else, who should undertake to prove that doctrine false? You most undoubtedly would. Well then, all that I have repeated, and much more, can be adduced in favour of the universalist faith: and does it not therefore follow, that to undertake a refutation of that faith is the very extremity of folly and presumption?

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#### HYMN—ABRAHAMIC COVENANT.

The Abrahamic covenant all people embraced,  
By it all who fell in Adam are in Jesus replaced;  
For Jehovah hath sworn, and he will not recall his vow,  
That in the name of Jesus every creature shall bow.

From his kingdom shall Christ remove all things that offend,  
He will finish transgression and bring sin to an end;  
No place for the devil nor his works will be found;  
Where sin once abounded grace much more shall abound.

Oh then shall the glorious restitution take place,  
The reconciliation of all Adam's lost race,  
Which Jehovah hath promised and announced unto man,  
By the mouth of all his prophets since creation began.

To Zion the ransom'd of the Lord shall repair,  
The Jew and the Gentile, bond and free shall be there;  
All people encircled in the Saviour's embrace,  
And sighing and sorrow to their songs shall give place.

On the mountain of Zion God a feast shall afford,  
And all nations shall flock unto this feast of the Lord:  
The songs of salvation shall employ every voice,  
Christ shall see of the travail of his soul and rejoice.

Every creature in heaven, on the earth, and beneath,  
Shall celebrate the triumph over Ha-des and death:  
All rule, and authority, and power overthrown,  
And, God all in all, the whole creation shall own.

## POPULAR DEBATE.—No. I.

## IS THE FUTURE SALVATION CONDITIONAL ?

## ARGUMENT IN THE AFFIRMATIVE.

1st. Man is a free moral agent ; as such he is a subject of law, of exhortation appealing to his interests and his fears, and of rewards and punishments. If his future safety is independent of his present conduct I can conceive of no use that religion can be to him ; why Christ should have died for his redemption ; or why he should be so earnestly, and repeatedly urged to attend to the important business of his salvation ! Surely if he is not to be regarded as a *probationer for eternity* there was no need for all this ; religion is a mockery : and the means of grace utterly useless, if his future felicity is secure without them.

2nd. We are solemnly assured in the Bible, that “ the soul that sinneth it shall die,”—that “ he that believeth not shall be damned,”—that “ he that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption,”—that “ we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive for the things done in his body, whether they be good, or whether they be evil.” &c. Universalists tell us that these threatenings, with the accompanying promises relate wholly to the *present* state, but for this we have but their assertion, and the strength of language which marks many of these texts, proves that assertion groundless. Is it in the present world that “ they who sow to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting” ? Do universalists enjoy their *everlasting* life in this world ? Christ is said to have become “ the author of *eternal* salvation to all them that obey him.” Does this also happen in the present state ? Is the *eternal* salvation to be realised here ? Moreover, an apostle exhorts to “ give all diligence to make your calling and election sure”—“ for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” Now that in this passage the reference is not to Christ’s kingdom here, is certain, for Christ’s kingdom here is not *everlasting*. Here, then, is an insurmountable proof, that our condition beyond death is dependant on our

conduct in life; but this is so important a point that it shall be proven farther.

The momentous question was put to Christ—"Are there few that be saved?" And what was his answer? was it such as favored the universalian theory? No indeed. "Strive to enter in at the strait gate, for many I say unto you shall seek to enter in and shall not be able—for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat; because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Here we have a direct issue between the Saviour and the universalian theory, the former affirming that but *few* will arrive at eternal bliss, and that few *conditionally*, and the latter affirming that all will arrive there, and that unconditionally.

But a still plainer case occurs; when the lawyer and the rich young man, inquired each of Christ what good thing he should do to inherit eternal life: instead of receiving an answer such as universalism would render, viz: Do nothing—you will be saved at all events; they were both informed that to mere legal obedience they must add the charity of the gospel; to the rich young man was said, "sell what thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven." Here observe by the way, that *heaven* is put by the Saviour in apposition with *eternal life*; which implies that they are synonymous. Treasure in heaven, then, it seems, may be secured by acts of charity upon earth! I defy all the sophistry of universalism to fairly meet the argument in this case, against their unconditional salvation! It cannot be done.

Finally, Let me caution you, my friends, against the vitiating and soul-destroying dogma of universal salvation; vitiating and soul-destroying it must necessarily be, since it takes away from virtue all its encouragements, and from vice all its restraints; which encouragements and restraints are eminently yielded by the hope of future reward, and the fear of future punishment. This is the very theory referred to by the prophet, which "makes the hearts of the righteous sad," and "strengthens the hands of the wicked by promising them life." For must it not dishearten the righteous to be told, that in the future world God will make no distinction between them and the vilest of sinners? Again then

I exhort you, my friends, to shun this doctrine, and pray God to guard you against a belief in it.

#### ARGUMENT IN THE NEGATIVE.

1st. Whether man is a free agent, and if so, to what extent, are questions which I will not here attempt to resolve ; these subtleties have in all ages engaged the highest orders of intellect, and, if Milton's authority in these matters be considered as valid, they have engaged even the reasoning powers of fallen angels in their dreary pandemonium.

“ Others apart sat on a hill retir'd,  
In thoughts more elevate, and reason'd high  
Of providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate ;  
Fix'd fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute ;  
And found no end, in wandering mazes lost.”

The mist of uncertainty, nevertheless, still clings around these questions as much as ever. I choose to assume that man *is*, in some degree, master of his volitions, and the actions thence ensuing ; that in many cases he could both will, and do, otherwise than as he does ; but that he is *not* free, to the extent supposed by my opponent, is susceptible of both philosophical and scriptural proof ; he surely is not at liberty to ruin himself past the remedial reach of his creator's grace : to suppose the contrary, is an almost blasphemous arraignment of that creator's wisdom and benevolence ! But if we even concede to man all the freedom contended for, it will not thence follow that he is a probationer (i. e. on trial) for eternity ; that he *is not*, is evident from several circumstances.

First, we cannot control the events even of the future hour ; I may propose in an hour hence, to start on a journey ; but when the moment arrives, I may be prevented by illness, or the weather, or the state of the roads or streams, or a failure of the means of conveyance. In short, a score of things may interpose betwixt my purpose and its execution ; and if such is the case with regard to the future hour, is it likely that God has entrusted to me a control over my eternal destinies ? Secondly, Why is the term of human life of so unequal duration with regard to different individuals, if this life is a state of trial ? Some pass the ordeal in one short hour, and attain the goal without the risks and hardships of the race ; whilst to others are allotted the toils and trials of

three fourths of a century ! Some, moreover, if this theory be true, pass to heaven by a path of flowers ; their education, habits, temperaments, worldly interest, family and social considerations ; all incline them to the choice of a religious life : whilst with others, the very reverse is the case ; they are religious, if at all, at a sacrifice of nearly every earthly interest ! If eternal bliss is to be attained at the price of a religious life, why is not that price equally within the reach of all ? And Thirdly, human life at the longest is too short, its lights are too dim ; its wants, trials, temptations, cares, too numerous ; and its momentous ends too obscurely revealed, if these ends are, the avoidance of an eternity of woe, and the ensurance of an eternity of bliss. No, no, it cannot be that we here are to form characters which shall last forever : for those who die in infancy form no characters at all ! And shall they so remain forever ? “ But they are innocent,” it will be said. True, but innocence is not virtue, when we have it not in our power to be otherwise. If innocence is a passport to eternal joys, we are all born into the world with the passport in our hands, and millions attain the prize by the mere accident of dying before an opportunity is offered of forfeiting the title !

But my opponent opines, that if man is not a probationer for eternity, there was no need of the saviour’s advent and death, and that preaching, and the whole business of religion is useless ! Really, I can see no force in this argument ; man is a rational Being ; he owes duties to his God, and to his fellows ; it is the office of religion to acquaint him with these, and to prompt him to a discharge of them—he is subject to numerous trials and afflictions ; under which it is the business of religion to sustain him—he is destined to a higher station in Being than that which he at present occupies : to this religion with friendly finger points his hopes. Jesus Christ came to expound to man the nature and claims of this religion : and by his ministry, miracles, life, death, and ascension, to exemplify and establish it. No necessity for religion, indeed ! It might as well he said that we shall not want religion in a future life, except it be to prepare us for another still beyond it ! Truth is, if even there were no future life, religion would still be needful to guide us peacefully and happily through the present, and wherever there is rational existence, religion is

indispensable to its happiness. I must decidedly protest against that narrow theory, which supposes religion only necessary as a sort of certificate of admission to the world of bliss! It is clear that such is the view of it which has practically obtained amongst the major part of christendom.\*

2nd. Let us now glance at the texts, which my friend thinks sustain his views of a future conditional salvation; he says truly that universalists are in the habit of referring them exclusively to the present state. "The soul that sinneth it shall die." All acquainted with the language of the bible know, that *soul* is but another word for *person* or *individual*; "Eight souls were saved from drowning," that is eight individuals were so saved. Now how many souls have sinned? "All have sinned;" (Rom. iii. 23.) therefore, in the sense intended, all have died. To say that this is an *endless* death, is not only to assume beyond what is revealed, but also to incur the absurd consequence that all mankind shall endlessly die!

"He that believeth not shall be damned." The Greek word here rendered *damned* is in other passages rendered *condemned*, and *judged*; and might with equal propriety have been so translated in this place. We have no warrant for saying that the damnation is to ensue beyond the grave. "He that believeth not IS condemned already." (John iii. 18.) My opponent, if he is not now, has been an unbeliever: while such he was damned, or he was not; if not, the text in his case proved false; if he was damned, it must have been in this state of being, and thus his view of the text is proven incorrect.

"He that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption." Where? Not surely in a future world, for there, neither flesh nor corruption exists: we have Paul for witness, that in the resurrection "this corruption shall put on incorruption:" and again, "for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible." (1 Cor. xv.) But my friend thinks the language

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\* The quaint, and calvinistically orthodox John Bunyan, shall bear me witness to the truth of this remark. "When he was come up to the gate he looked up to the writing that was above, and then began to knock, supposing that entrance should have been quickly administered to him; but he was asked by the men, that looked over the top of the gate, 'Whence come you? and what would you have?' he answered, 'I have eat and drank in the presence of the king.' Then they asked him for his *certificate* that they might go in and show it to the king. So he fumbled in his bosom for one and found none, &c." I need hardly add, that he was denied admission.—See Pilgrim's Progress, part first.

of the latter clause of this text *too strong*, to apply to things of time: "he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting." 'Do Universalists,' he somewhat wittily asks, 'enjoy their *everlasting life* in this world?' I will treat him to a bible answer, "He that believeth on the son HATH everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but IS PASSED from death unto life." (John iii. 36.) You see then, (if the scriptures are to be the umpire between us,) that Universalists, as well as other honest folk who believe in Christ, may enjoy 'everlasting life in this world.' It seems but reasonable, moreover, that the harvest should be reaped where the seed is sown; he would be a sagacious fellow who should think of going to the *moon* to gather a crop of turnips which he had planted on this earth! Equally sagacious is he who talks of going to a *world of spirits* to reap corruption of *the flesh*.

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive according to the deeds done in his body, whether they be good, or whether they be bad." Begging my opponent's pardon I must tell him, that, in the sense of this text for which he contends, he does not believe it himself! Does he, for instance, believe that *he* will suffer in a future world for all his transgressions in this? Not he; notwithstanding that he will acknowledge to have sinned often, and greatly, yet he thinks that his post mortem state will be one of unmingled happiness! He does not believe that Moses, in the future state, will be punished for his murder of the Egyptian, whose body he buried in the sand: nor that Samson will be held to a reckoning for his scandalous connexion with Delilah; nor Peter, for the denial of his Lord; nor Thomas, for his obstinate refusal to credit Christ's resurrection without sensible demonstration. And yet he puts upon the text before us such a construction as requires him to believe all this! Let us now look for the true sense of this passage: leaving out the words added by the translators it reads as follows, "For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may RECEIVE THE THINGS IN BODY, according to that he hath done, whether good or bad." Where is the judgment seat of Christ? Are we any where told it is in eternity? No; on the contrary, Christ himself says, "For judgment I am come into *this world*;" (John ix.



39.) and as to the time of this judgment he says, "*Now* is the judgment of this world;" (John xii. 31.) and, indeed, it was long before predicted of him that he should "execute judgment and justice *in the earth*;" (Jer. xxiii. 5.) and another prophet saith, "he shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment *in the earth*: and the isles shall wait for his law." (Isaiah xlii. 4.) "The judgment seat of Christ" is a figure, implying that by the principles of his gospel human actions are tested in this latter-day dispensation; Jesus himself explicitly sanctions this definition. "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: *the word that I have spoken*, the same shall judge him in the last day." (John xii. 48.) Let these remarks suffice for the present, they sufficiently show that an application of the text in dispute to a future state, is unauthorized and gratuitous.

Pass we now to what my opponent deemed his most invincible proofs, perhaps we shall find them not absolutely insuperable after all. A young lawyer, it seems, and a certain rich young man, inquired of Christ what they should do to inherit eternal life; and because they were directed to superadd christian charity to legal obedience in order to the attainment of this object, my friend thinks it quite clear that future endless bliss is conditionally bestowed. Were I a logician I would whisper in his ear, "my friend, first *prove*, what you here *assume*, viz. that the scripture sense of 'eternal life' is synonymous with 'future endless bliss.' " But this he thinks he has already done, by showing an instance in which this phrase is put in apposition with the word *heaven*. It behooves him, however, to show also that this last term always, or even generally, is used to signify the world of bliss. That it is not, I can establish past dispute; yea more, I can establish that it does not *in this very instance*. For it is immediately afterward confounded with the "kingdom of heaven;" "Verily, I say unto you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven." Now I know of no one instance in which this phrase signifies the future world of bliss; its invariable reference is to the *church*, or the *gospel dispensation*: the same that is likened to "a grain of mustard seed;" to "leaven which a woman hid in two measures of meal;" to "ten virgins;" and numerous other things. This kingdom is a purely spiritual

institution ; it "cometh not," saith the saviour, "with observation, the kingdom of heaven is within you:" and Paul says it consists of "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the holy spirit." (Rom. xiv. 15.) It was truly difficult in Christ's day for a rich man to become a subject of this kingdom ; opposed as were its unpretending and self-denying principles, to the pomp, and glitter, and ostentation of the world ; and embracing only, as was then the case, a few unlearned, untitled, and obscure fishermen, as its denizens. Even many years subsequent to Christ's time, an apostle had occasion to say : "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called." (1 Cor. i. 26.)\* How hardly, then, would a rich man resist the blandishments of the proud world, and become a follower of the humble Nazarene ! "It is easier," said Christ, "for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." (Mat. xix. 24.) This led the disciples in apparent surprise to inquire, "Who then can be saved ?" The answer given is strangely at variance with the doctrine of *salvation by human agency* : "With *men* this is *impossible*, but with God all things are possible." What is this but virtually saying that our salvation is not by any means of ourselves ! that it is something over which we have no control ?—and which, therefore, cannot, in the nature of things, be conditional ; but must come solely from God, who alone can secure it to us ? And the same thing is elsewhere repeatedly affirmed. "By grace are ye saved through faith ; *and that not of yourselves* : it is the gift of God : not of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph. ii. 8.) Which indeed is avowedly the doctrine of all protestant christendom, and has been maintained also by some eminent lights in the Romish church, more especially by St. Augustine : and yet, with singular inconsistency, they mostly deny in fact, what they so clearly avow in terms !

The disciples next inquire (for I wish here to meet all the apparent difficulties of this passage) what *they* should receive, who had forsaken all and followed him : he answers them, "When the son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also

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\* The Countess of Huntingdon (a rigid calvinist) used to say, that her hope of salvation would be cut off by this text but for the presence of *one* letter ! But for that blessed letter *n* it would read, Not *any* noble are called.

shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or land, for my name sake, shall receive a hundred-fold, and shall inherit everlasting life." I know well the strength of educational prejudices; and I also know that these prejudices incline us to apply this language to a world beyond the grave; but let us scrutinize it carefully: Are the apostles to sit on thrones, and judge the twelve tribes of Israel, in a future world? Is it in a future world that the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory? On the contrary, we have his own repeated assurance that this took place at the conclusion of the Jewish, and opening of the gospel *æon* or age: expressly, and repeatedly, is it said by the saviour, when speaking of this very event, "Verily, I say unto you, there be some standing here which shall not taste of death, till they see the son of man coming in his kingdom." (Mat. xxi. 28. Mark viii. 38. xiii. 26. Luke. ix. 27.) What was the precise idea meant to be conveyed by the expression, "ye shall sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel," I pretend not to decide; certainly, however, it is not to be understood literally; and that the disciples themselves understood it to relate to things of time is manifest: on the very night before his crucifixion they were contending as to which of them should occupy the chief places in his kingdom; and when at length the reign of Christ commenced, we find them constantly, in their preaching and writing, alluding to this divine dispensation under the title of "the kingdom," (Acts viii. 12. xx. 25. xxviii. 39.) and as having a present existence, "who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and HATH TRANSLATED US into the kingdom of his dear son." (Col. i. 13. 1 Thes. ii. 12.) This is "the *everlasting kingdom* of our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ," on which my opponent dwelt so emphatically, and which he sagely supposes cannot exist in time because of its being termed *everlasting*! Pity for him that he should have read his bible to so little purpose! For *as the kingdom* of Christ, if Paul may be credited, it cannot exist in eternity: he informs us that at the close of terrestrial things, or at the era of the general resurrection, Christ "shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father: when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority, and power: for he must reign till he hath put all enemies un-

der his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall THE SON HIMSELF ALSO be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." (1 Cor. xv. 24—28.) My opponent's supposition then, you perceive, that the everlasting kingdom of Christ is in eternity, is quite wide of the fact.

I have already shown that *everlasting life* is enjoyed in this state of existence; let me put this interesting point beyond all cavil: Christ himself says, "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, HATH EVERLASTING LIFE;" (John v. 24.) he repeats the same, (John vi. 47.) he also defines this life; "This IS life eternal, that men may know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." (John xvii. 2.) So soon then as this knowledge is possessed is the eternal life consequent thereof enjoyed. The apostle Paul, writing to the Romans, says, "Being made free from sin, and become servants of God, Ye have your fruits unto holiness, and the end (or consequence) everlasting life." (Rom. vi. 22.) By supplying in the closing clause of this text what grammarians call the *ellipsis*, or the omitted words, it would read "and ye have the end (or consequence) which is everlasting life." John says, "No murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." (1 John iii. 15.) These instances will suffice to settle the fact beyond controversy, that the phrases, "eternal life," and "everlasting life," are often used in reference to present gospel enjoyment. I, however, do not thence infer that they never point to the immortal existence of the future state: still I cannot positively say that they ever have such reference; but from the nature of this life, we cannot doubt that it is the same that is enjoyed by all pure intelligences in every department of Being.

But few words are necessary, methinks, in disposing of my friend's now only remaining scriptural argument; I allude to the passage concerning the narrow, and the broad roads: the one leading to life, the other to destruction; the one but sparsely, the other very populous occupied. And does my friend seriously deem that these represent the highways to bliss and woe unending? Is it the fact that the path to final happiness is so narrow, and difficult of access, that but few are so fortunate as to find it; while on the other hand, the numerous travellers to endless ruin

are accommodated with a broad, M'Adamized road? How strangely in connection with this circumstance sounds the declaration, "The Lord hath no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that all should turn unto him and live!" If I could adopt my opponent's view of this subject, I would abandon all pretensions to a belief in the infinite goodness of God, or in his alleged disposition to save the human family; and I should be at an utter loss how to discriminate between an all-benevolent deity, and an all-malignant devil! The meaning of the passage is briefly as follows: Christ confined his personal ministry to the Jews, but such was the bigotry, and so many and unyielding the prejudices of that people, that but few, and they with great difficulty, could be persuaded to become the subjects of his kingdom; much the major part persisted in rejecting him; they would not come unto him that they might have life: and, as a consequence, they were involved in the destruction which ensued when their city and temple were desolated by the Roman army: the few among the Jews who did by faith in the saviour enter into life are designated by Paul, "a remnant according to the election of grace." (Rom. xi. 8.) Christ saith in the text, "many, I say unto you, *shall seek to enter in*, and shall not be able:" and in agreement with this, the afore-mentioned apostle says, "What then? Israel hath not obtained that *which he seeketh after*; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." (ibid. 7.) Thus endeth the examination of the texts relied on in the affirmative of this argument: let us now glance at some additional considerations on the negative side.

1st.—Supposing a future salvation conditional, what *are* the conditions? Is *faith* one? If so, forty-nine fiftieths of the past generations of man are already damned to all eternity, for they did not, in this life, and could not, believe in the saviour! Moreover, it is certain that the disciples of Christ had no *will* in the matter of their belief; it was forced upon them by sensible evidence: for years they remained ignorant of the true character of their master, notwithstanding that they had the advantage of his teaching and miracles, and when at length they became convinced on this head, that conviction was *forced* upon them by evidence which they could not resist. Thomas, in particular, declared, "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put

my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, *I will not believe.*" (John xx. 26.) There can surely be no merit in an act in which we are *passive*; equally so as in the act of respiration: and that such is the case in the business of belief in general, that it is not a matter of *volition*, is as susceptible of demonstration as is any moral axiom whatever.

2nd.—Let us suppose *perfect holiness* one of the conditions: "without which no man can see the Lord:" (Heb. xii. 14.) where now shall we find one who comes up to this mark? Paul acknowledges that he had not, (Phil. iii. 15.) and Solomon says "There is not a just man on the earth that doeth good and sinneth not." (Eccle. vii. 20.) How small then is the chance of salvation beyond death to any, if it depend on the attainment of true holiness here! My opponent himself will confess, first, that with the taint of sin upon his soul he cannot enjoy the felicity of heaven, and second, that he will never in this world be free from that taint. What remains then? Ergo. Except changed after death he must be endlessly damned! I would not willingly give head-room to a doctrine which closed all chance of future bliss even against myself.

3rd.—If neither faith nor holiness, separately, is sufficient as a term of admission to heaven, but the union of both is required, it then follows, that with the highest degree of perfection attainable by man, an individual may yet be endlessly lost, if he have the misfortune to be ignorant of gospel truth! And then too, what becomes of another item in the same creed, viz. that, in a future world, every man will be rewarded according to his works?

Thus on every hand we meet insuperable difficulties in the way of a future conditional salvation, whilst on the other side I know of none that may not be easily obviated: many are startled, it is true, at the idea, that even the deepest guilt into which a man may plunge himself, will not utterly sink him beneath the reach of divine grace, and shut the gates of future bliss against his soul: but let such reflect that even according to their own belief, the worst of sinners experience a free pardon upon repentance in this life, and that here or hereafter God's mercy is the same—his love to his creatures the same—the power of his grace, and the benevolent objects of his government the same; or all that we are told of the immutability of his nature must go for nothing. That the

mere depth of human guilt will prove no barrier against the efficacious operations of divine grace, is obvious from his promises, "though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; and though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." (Isaiah i. 18.) It is a most pitiful puerility to object that promises of this nature only indicate the divine dispositions toward man *in time*, for that implies that in eternity these dispositions will have changed; and that the reformation of sinful intelligences will have ceased to be an object with God! which are most gross absurdities.

My opponent alleges that ours is the doctrine alluded to by Ezekiel, which "strengtheneth the hands of the wicked by promising him life;" and thereby "makes the hearts of the righteous sad." If the righteous are made sad by being told that all sin, and misery, and death, and disorder, shall eventually come to a period—that the infinite purity and felicity will be transfused into all conscient existence—that God's promises will be verified, his will accomplished—the ends of Christ's death consummated, and their own prayers answered; if this, I say, is saddening to righteous hearts, I can only say it is pity for them, and that I most fervently pray to be delivered from a heart of the kind! But is it true that we strengthen the hands of the wicked? Do we promise him life in his wickedness? Nothing can be farther from truth than an affirmative answer to these questions. We insist that death—certain—present death—death constituted of remorse, misery, degradation, and every kind of mental (and often bodily) suffering, shall be the harvest of the sinner in proportion to what he sows. It were an easy thing to retort the charge upon the doctrine of my opponent, and to show that *it* promises absolute impunity to crime; however deep, and long-continued, provided that it be but repented of this side the grave! But as I have been already diffuse in my reply, I will not dwell upon this manifest advantage in favour of my theory.

I could say much relative to the restraining effects of his doctrine of post-mortem rewards and punishments: I might point to countries in which this belief is universal, (such is the case in Mahomedan and Pagan lands,) and consider the moral and religious condition of those countries: I might point to ages past when no voice was lifted, nor allowed to be lifted, against this tenet, and

expose the degradation and infamy of those ages ; but let this pass, it will suffice to remark that in our own age and country, at least nineteen twentieths of the criminal offences committed, are by persons who believe and have been educated in that doctrine : when these dark and mystic fables, shall have given place to manlier and more scriptural views of God's character and government, there is every reason to think that the tone of moral feeling will be more pure and elevated.

In the conclusion, then, let me earnestly entreat you, my friends, to lay every selfish and party consideration aside, and search diligently for *truth* ; let no croaking menaces, dictated by craft, and in all times resorted to for their effect upon weak minds, discourage you from the pursuit, or repress your efforts for mental emancipation. Heed not my opponent's counsel by praying to be guarded against this or that belief : you cannot *certainly* know *which*, or whether *either*, is correct ; it would therefore be a mockery of God to offer up a prayer of the kind ; it would be virtually asking him to keep you in your present faith right or wrong ! This is the essence of bigotry. Rather pray to have your minds disenthralled from prejudice—to have its educational mists dissipated, and to be guarded against the influence of selfish or party considerations in the search for truth. You may be told that this or that doctrine is not *safe* ; treat such suggestions with the contempt they merit ; they have been used by every corrupt party, whether in politics or religion, in order to repress exertions toward reform : *Not safe*, is the monarchist's watchword of alarm against a change in government ; the same is echoed by the Papist against reform in religion ; and it is reiterated by the advocates of an endless hell, against an advance in divine knowledge : this watchword has, to some extent, accomplished its intended ends, but it is becoming trite, and is losing its power. *Truth is safe*, whatever that truth is ; and its pursuit is safe, for should we even fail of the end we cannot but get the nearer to it for our exertions, and fail, if fail we must, with thousands of the noblest and purest of mankind who have failed before us.

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## POPULAR DEBATE,—No. II.

## UNIVERSALISM REDUCED TO AN ABSURDITY.

In a popular attempt to refute this daring heresy, I deem it not only perfectly allowable, but also the most proper and successful mode, to point out its absurd nature and consequences ; or in other words, to use the method of argumentation termed by logicians the *reductio ad absurdum*. I shall adopt this course on the present occasion, and, therefore, I ask in advance that my auditors will pardon, for the motive's sake, such of my remarks as may seem to border on levity. I hold it to be self-evident, that a doctrine which is fairly reducible to absurdity, must be false.

1st.—What can we possibly *gain* by adopting the universalist faith ? It is not pretended that we shall thereby render our *future* salvation more secure : admitting its truth, we shall all share its benefits in another life, whether we have believed in it or not. Perhaps we may be told, that to be possessed of this faith will add to our *present* happiness ; but this cannot be granted. I am as happy in my belief at the present as though I were a universalist, and I know not but happier. There is then nothing to be gained by the adoption of this faith, *if even true* ; and if it be false ! dreadful ! dreadful will be the issue to those who are deluded by it !

2nd.—Universalists manifest a marvelous faculty in believing the *promises* of God ; but tell them of his *threatenings*, and you will find them nowise disposed to credit them. Oh no, “God is too good to punish men ; it cannot be that he means what he says in this matter.” All which, to be sure, is in strict accordance with the carnal heart. If a father promise his son an apple, or any other present, the little urchin will take good care to jog his memory about it ; but if a beating be promised he will soon contrive to forget that, and flatter himself his father will forget it too. So it is exactly with universalists in regard to the deity !

3rd.—No doctrine could be hit upon more consoling or convenient to *wicked men* ; for the bible tells them they “shall not live out half their days ;” and this system says to them, “Never mind it, sinners ; you shall go immediately to heaven.” There

is a decided advantage accruing from sin according to this teaching; for if sin shortens men's days, it only takes them the sooner to heaven! The antediluvians, for instance, were, on account of their abominable crimes, swept away to glory by the waters of the flood! whilst poor old Noah, for his piety, was doomed to linger for years in this vale of sorrow! The same was the case with the Sodomites, Egyptians, Assyrians, etc. who provoked the wrath of God to kill them, and take them home to a world of bliss! A fine doctrine, this.

4th.—How would you like, my brethren, to sit down in the kingdom of God with murderers, adulterers, thieves, and every description of wicked persons; the *rag, tag and bob-tail* of mankind? This will surely be the case, if universalism be true! All the moral classifications of human society will be merged in one motley and conglomerated mass! If heaven is to be graced with this kind of neighborhood, I can only say, "O my soul, come not thou into their secret: and to their assembly, mine honor, be not thou united!" Those who wish for such a heaven may have it to themselves for me.

5th.—This doctrine furnishes not an *apology* merely, but even a *motive* for suicide. Who would bear the ills of life, its disappointments, sorrows, pains, bereavements, &c. if at any moment he pleased, he could leave it for a better? Surely universalists are fools to buffet with the storms of time, when if they chose it they might at once push home their bark into a peaceful eternity! If I were of this belief, I would look about me for the easiest mode of translation to glory, and would put an instant period to this troublesome existence by drowning, or hanging, or shooting, or poisoning; for according to universalism, these are all but convenient instruments of removal from earth to heaven!

6th.—It furnishes a motive to *murder* also. I should certainly think it right, if I were of this faith, when I saw my friends in affliction or embarrassment, to despatch them in the easiest manner I could, and thus put an end to their misery. Who could blame me, when my motive was so good?

7th.—Universalists tell us that all the punishment due to sin is inflicted in this life. Let me suppose a case. An individual spends his whole life in the most atrocious crimes; from bad to worse he goes, and goes with accumulated speed, down the steep

declivity of guilt, until his very existence becomes an intolerable burthen to him, and he terminates it at length by suicide. Where does he receive his punishment for the act of self-destruction? can any one inform me?

8th.—But if sinners are punished in this world, the Psalmist was mistaken; for the prosperous state of wicked men excited his envy; he saw that “they are not in trouble as other men, neither are they plagued like other men;” that “their eyes stand out with fatness, they have more than heart can wish:” and “they even have no bands in their death.” “Behold!” he exclaims, “these are the ungodly who prosper in the world: they increase in riches.” Now all this is quite another tune from that which universalism plays us! which of the twain shall we accredit? Both we cannot.

Suppose, my auditors, that we take a peep into an universalian futurity: Strange scenes present themselves to our view! I see there together, in happy and peaceful fellowship, the slanderer and the slandered—the assassin and his victims—the tyrant, and those who on earth groaned beneath his yoke—the seducer of innocence, and she whom, with a broken heart and a ruined reputation, he sent to a premature grave—the murdered son of God, and those who mocked him in his dying agony; all, in promiscuous, and indiscriminate companionship, together! I wonder how long it will be ere those glorified villains will fall back into their old habits! And, by the way, I am here reminded of a question put to a universalist by his own child, which had the effect of opening his eyes to the ridiculous and delusive character of this heresy. The little boy had been reading the story of “The Babes in the Wood;” with the inquisitiveness natural to youth he inquired, “Father, where did those babes go to after they were murdered?” “To heaven, of course,” replied the parent. “And where did the wicked men go to who murdered them?” “Why, I suppose,” the father stammeringly replied, “that they went to heaven too.” “But wont they murder the poor children again?” the boy once more inquired: and to this question the father could render no reply; it proved a means, with God’s blessing, of awakening him to the awfully insecure nature of the universalian system.

## REPLY TO THE ABOVE.

The opponents of our faith are welcome to select against it whatever weapon they may deem most effectual: if they are able, without a distortion of its features, to exhibit it in a *ridiculous* light, we will not complain; for we think (as my opponent has said) that a doctrine must be false which can fairly be reduced to an absurdity. It may, however, turn out, ere we are done, that my opponent will attain an experimental persuasion of the truth of the proverb, that "people who live in glass houses should not throw stones."

First, we are asked, what is to be *gained* by the adoption of the universalist belief? It might as well be asked what is to be gained by believing in the Copernican, rather than in the Ptolemaic system of astronomy? or in the true view of any science rather than in the false? What is to be gained! so much that hours would scarcely suffice for telling; yet it may be comprehended in the declaration, that *all* is to be gained that is implied in being translated out of superstitious darkness into divine light. That it will make our *after-death* felicity no more certain, is granted; and my opponent must also grant that the same is the case with literary, scientific, or any other kind of knowledge: but will he therefore say that they are useless? Such, at least, is the logical deduction from his argument! But he informs us that he is as happy, during the present, in *his* belief, as he could be in *mine*. Perhaps so. What *is* his belief? It is no less than this: that untold millions of human beings, among whom may be his own father and mother, wife and children, and *possibly* himself, shall groan forever beneath the wrath of God! Is he as happy in this persuasion, as if he confidently trusted that all our race will at last be the subject of unending holiness and felicity in heaven? I hope, for the honor of his heart, that he did not feel as he spoke when he gave utterance to so monstrous a sentiment!

2nd.—He charges us with being more ready to accredit the *promises* than the *threatenings* of God. It is sufficient that I deny this charge, and affirm, that we have too good an opinion of the *veracity* of the divine Being, to suppose, that he has threatened punishments which he will never inflict; and of his *benevolence*, to suppose that his inflictions will not consist with the ultimate well

being of the offender. And if such are the nature and end of the divine retributions, why should we be loth to believe the threatenings respecting them? I truly can see no reason. His simile of the lad and his father does not fairly illustrate the case: nor is it natural, for a child is as much inclined to believe his parent when he *threatens* as when he *promises*, provided the threatening be just and reasonable in itself; but if a father should menace his son with the cutting his throat, or dashing out his brains, the son might well not think him serious, except he have previously known him for a brutal tyrant. So it is with universalists in regard to our Father in heaven; we believe what he *has* threatened; not what my opponent's creed *says* he has threatened; we cannot so far outrage his justice and benevolence.

3rd.—Our doctrine, it seems, “is very consoling to *wicked men* :” well, this circumstance surely does not disprove its identity with the *gospel*, for that is termed “glad tidings of great joy which shall be unto *all* people.” But my opponent represents it as holding out encouragement to sin, by telling men that the shorter they render their stay on earth by their crimes, the sooner they will get to heaven. Now this objection to universalism rests on the false assumption, that men pass, according to this theory, immediately from earth to heaven. This is a mistake; we pretend not to know what is the condition of men intermediately to death and the resurrection; we have the assurance of Christ that the subjects of the resurrection will be “as the angels of God in heaven,” “neither do they die any more, but are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection :” (Luke xx. 36.) and Paul also fully satisfies us that the resurrection state of mankind will be one of incorruption, immortality, and glory. (1 Cor. xv.) We then are content with believing within scripture warrant, and affect not to be wise above what is written relative to the future state.\* Our opponents, on the contrary, assume, that so soon as men die they have an endless abode assigned them either in heaven or hell, according as they have been righteous or wicked on earth. We shall see now that my friend's objection rebounds against his own dogma. He will admit that Moses and Aaron, because of their disobedience to the divine command in

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\* The reader will find inquiries upon this subject at some length in a future No.

certain cases, were cut off from the earth, and denied the privilege of accompanying the host of Israel into the promised land, (Deut. xxxii. 49, 50.) But Moses and Aaron, according to my friend's creed, went immediately to heaven, and it thence follows that their disobedience was *advantageous* to them; it took them the sooner to heaven! Moreover, my friend may according to the course of nature have full fifty years yet to live, which is a long time to be kept out of the world of bliss: but suppose he should murder his neighbour to-morrow, and improve (as nearly all murderers do) the space between the sentence of death and its execution, by repentance; his peace with God may soon be effected, and his arrival in the realms of glory will be the earlier for his crime by half a century! Here is encouragement to crime with a witness! Universalism tells men that sin *will not* in any case, *can not*, go unpunished. Does this encourage them to sin? No, surely, except they covet punishment: on the other hand, my opponent's doctrine tells them "you will not be punished in this life, nor (provided you repent) in another." Of course every villain promises himself that he will repent, and thus secure an immunity from punishment in both worlds. Which now is the theory which holds out inducement to crime?

4th.—My friend is most morbidly apprehensive, that if our heresy be true he shall not meet in heaven with society as pure and holy as himself! I will essay to quiet his nerves upon this head. True, it is not in my power to tell him (even on his own ground) that he will meet no murderers there, for he expects to meet Moses, David, Paul, and others, against whom the crime of murder stands recorded in the inspired record. (see Exod. ii. 12. 2 Sam. xi. 15. Acts viii. 1. ix. 1.) Neither can I promise him that heaven will contain no incestuous persons, or drunkards, for he expects to join Noah and Lot there; the former of whom was guilty of one of these crimes, and the latter of both. (see Gen. ix. 21. *ibid.* xix. 30—36.) I can tell him too of fornicators, adulterers, thieves, swearers, &c., whom he thinks he shall see in heaven, and with whom he thinks he can enjoy good fellowship without moral contamination. (see Hosea i. 2, 3. 2 Sam. xi. 4. Luke xiii. 43. Mat. xvii. 74. &c.) Why then does my opponent urge against our faith an objection which makes equally against his own? If he cannot consent to enjoy the felicity of that bright world in company with his fel-

low sinners, I know of no help for him; for I scarcely think that another heaven will be prepared for the exclusive use of some few *Simon pures* of his own stamp!

He will tell us, perhaps, that the persons who committed the crimes above mentioned, are saved, according to his doctrine, upon the condition of *repentance*: well, we also admit that no man can enjoy God except he is first morally *qualified* for that enjoyment; he supposes that only *a few* will attain this qualification; we think (and upon sufficient bible warrant too) that *all* will attain it. The difference between us, therefore, has less respect to the *nature* of the principle, than to the *extent of its application*. According to his creed nearly all murderers are saved; it rarely happens that one is led to the gallows, who does not express a confidence of his acceptance with God; and they are usually accompanied by ministers of the gospel, who expressly sanction this proceeding. Indeed, the situation of the murderer after his sentence, is decidedly more favourable to the great business of preparation for heaven, than is that of the honest member of society who dies upon his bed; the former has his faculties in full play, his days are numbered, he almost knows his hour; in the solitude of his cell he is subject to few interruptions; holy men, and books adapted to aid his devotions, are at his command; hence it rarely happens that this awful interval is not improved in the manner aforementioned: and it may be asserted with undoubted truth that, according to the creed of endless misery, there are infinitely more murderers saved than of honest men, in proportion to the number of each class! How does my friend like that result?

5th.—Let us now look at the declaration that universalism furnishes a motive to suicide. I have already shown that we do not believe in an immediate translation from earth to heaven; wherein then consisteth the inducement to self-destruction! Of all people on earth we have the *least* reason for being dissatisfied with the present life; for according to our view, all its sorrows, temptations, trials, disappointments, &c., are appointed by infinite love, to exercise us here for our hereafter advantage. If we imagined that an endless hell awaited us when we leave this brief life of tears, and that each crime we committed might sink us the deeper in its fiery surges, it is probable that we

should become desperate from despair, and rush headlong (like the charmed bird that flies within the serpent's reach) into the very ruin we were most concerned to shun. Alas! how many a tender and amiable being has fallen a victim to this dreadful persuasion! The benevolent Cowper had nearly been included in the number. But surely the universalist, whose faith dispels these murky clouds from his moral sky, and conducts him in anticipation to an universally bright and glorious conclusion of all things, may well be content with, and cheerful under, the dispensations of life, however dark at the present those dispensations be.

6th.—And a motive to murder also! “Now mark” (as Sir William Draper saith in his letters to Junius,) “how plain a tale shall put him down, and transfuse the blush into his own cheek.” On the ground of *pity*, he alleges, he could, consistently with our faith, murder a person laboring under distress and embarrassment; and despatch him to a better world. But I will show you, my auditors, that agreeably to his own creed, the motive to murder upon this ground, is infinitely greater. He is a father: if he looks with an impartial eye around him he will see, that not more than one in twenty of the human race (even within the limits of christendom) die in possession of the fitness for heaven which he thinks is alone attainable in this brief existence; consequently the chances of endless damnation against those of salvation, in regard to every person who grows to a responsible age, is, at the least, as nineteen to one! At the same time he believes that *all* who die in infancy go to heaven. What a motive is here, then, to infanticide! What parent can think of aiding the progress of his offspring toward maturity in view of this fact! Nineteen chances in the scale against his soul, to one in his favor! On the ground of *revenge* also, the motive to murder is great according to my opponent's creed. An individual entertained against another a most deadly hostility; he brooded for some time over several plans of mischief toward him, but none seemed sufficiently deep to satisfy him. “If even I take his life,” thought he, “he is so good a christian that I shall but be doing him the favor of hastening his exit to eternal happiness.” At length he bethought him of a scheme; he waylaid his object, got his person fully within his power: “Renounce your God,” said he, “or I



plunge this dagger to your heart." The poor wretch, listening wholly to his fears, did as he was bidden; he renounced God: whereupon his enemy immediately despatched him, exclaiming "Now I have ruined you body and soul, and am fully avenged."

7th.—Universalists, it seems, are quite wide of the truth in affirming that sinners are here punished for their sins! My opponent has found scriptural proof to the contrary! Well, if this be so we have scripture proof against scripture proof; for the bible saith "the righteous shall be recompensed *in the earth*, much more the wicked and the sinner." (Prov. xi. 31.) But it is *not* so; the very authority he quoted is direct against him. (see Psl. lxxiii.) David, in this Psalm, sets out with the declaration that, "truly God *is* good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart;" he goes on to say that he had formerly doubted this fact, and had supposed that the wicked were more favored than the righteous; a merely superficial view of human life had led him to false conclusions in this matter; and he gave way to discontent, supposing that it was in vain that he had cleansed his hands, and preferred the service of God. But when he went into the sanctuary he was undeceived, he there learned that the prosperity of the wicked is but in appearance; that it is unstable, liable to sudden reverses; and, moreover, that they "are utterly consumed with terrors," and subject to be visited with swift desolation. He thence confesses that his former complaints were foolish and brutal, and ends with declaring "It is good for me to draw near to God," &c. Now it must be apparent to all who look candidly into this case, that the very sentiment which David confesses to have adopted hastily and in ignorance of the fact, is now put gravely forth by my opponent as an established revealed truth! I request him to lay his hand upon his heart and ask himself, "Do I regret that I have chosen the service of God (even if there be no hereafter consequence from it) in preference to the pursuits of sin?" Let him, I say, put this question directly to his conscience; if it render an affirmative answer, its moral state must be such as no true christian can envy: on the other hand, if its response be negative, his doctrine that sin is not here punished, nor virtue rewarded, is refuted by his own experience.

8th.—We are asked a question in relation to the suicide, which I confess to be as difficult an one as can be propounded against

our system. Allowing that in a long career of crime he received a due amount of punishment for every offence, where does he receive the penalty for the *last* act, that of self-destruction? I will endeavor to answer this question: *difficult*, I acknowledge it, but not insuperable. First, then, I observe that life is a *blessing*, and when an individual deprives himself of a blessing, he sustains a loss of course, and that loss is a suitable and adequate punishment. That life is a blessing, is clearly assumed in the scriptures: length of days is often promised to the righteous, while sinners are menaced with the reverse. If either of you, my auditors, should rashly throw away all your earthly fortune, would not the *loss* of that fortune be an adequate penalty for your rashness? And Secondly, I observe, that ere a person can consent to part with life by his own act, he must have previously undergone the very extremity of mental suffering; for so deeply seated a sentiment is the love of life in the human bosom, that it is rarely eradicated whilst reason retains its empire. Dreary indeed must be the state of that heart, to which the cold grave becomes a welcome refuge from existence! Self-murder is, indeed, often in itself the penalty of a life of crime: the wretch who becomes his own executioner is frequently driven thereto by the numerous and complex evils which his guilt has brought down upon his head. But more often, it is to be feared, does suicide result from mental misfortunes for which the subject is nowise responsible.

Lastly, we come to the peep into our *universalian futurity*, with which it pleased my opponent to indulge us. "There," quoth he, "are the murderer and his victims—the seduced and the seducer—the tyrant, and his slaves—the crucified son of God, and those who mocked him in his dying agonies." Well; better thus, I trow, than to have this state of things reversed; Jesus prayed for his murderers: will it shock his benevolent soul to find his dying prayer answered in their forgiveness? The martyred Stephen supplicated that the bloody deed of those who stoned him should not be laid to their charge. Will it grieve him to meet them in a world of universal peace and reconciliation? Paul was one of them, and him, at least, even by my opponent's admission, Stephen will sit down in fellowship with.

Pardon me, my friends, if I so far trifle with this subject, as to notice the smart little master's question relative to the "*Babes*

*in the Wood;*" by which, it seems, his naughty universalist papa was converted to the comforting belief of an endless hell! I shrewdly suspect, however, that this is but a *pious hoax*, of the *tract* family: we will look at it nevertheless. Saul, (afterward called Paul), persecuted the saints. My friend will admit that these saints went to heaven, and that Paul went there too: will he not persecute them again? Where did Uriah go to after his murder? My friend will probably say "to heaven." And when David died, where went he? "He went to heaven also." But will he not murder Uriah again? And will not Lot get drunk, and commit incest again in that world? And Peter repeat the denial of his Lord? &c. &c. A puerile argument this, you perceive; but my opponent deemed it worthy of serious consideration in favor of his dogma of endless suffering, and it is full worthy of that cause.

We may now, I presume, without sacrilege, peep into the futurity of my opponent. Alackaday! we shall see a spectacle of spectacles! Parents, children, wives, husbands, brothers, sisters, neighbors, friends, severed for eternity; some singing in heaven, some screaming in hell! There are in the realms of bliss many miscreants, as red with blood as murder could make them; who cancelled their crimes by a brief term of repentance before death; and they now see far down in the deeps of eternal suffering beneath them, many of the unhappy victims whom they were the instruments in sending thither with their sins upon their heads!

There, among the blest, is Zedekiah, who caused the streets of Jerusalem to flow with blood—there Charles V. of Spain, who drenched nearly the whole eastern continent in gore—Lewis XI. who boasted that he had slaughtered more than 200,000 heretics—St. Dominic, who founded the Inquisition—Peter the hermit, who instigated the crusades—the bloody Mary of England, and numerous other sainted miscreants, whose names come down to us loaded with the execrations of mankind: but who, nevertheless, are supposed to have *died* "in the odour of sanctity:" how many of the victims of their cruelty are groaning amongst the damned it is not in human power to estimate!\* My friend supposes it a hor-

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\* I took up a paper a few weeks since, containing the sentence and accompanying address of a judge to a criminal, doomed to execution for the murder of his brother's wife. "You," said the judge, (in substance, I pretend not to give his words,) "will

rid result of our faith, that the seducer of innocence should be found at last in heaven, in company with her whom he had sent with a broken heart and ruined reputation to an untimely grave. Alas ! if this consequence shocks him, what must he think of his own dogma ? according to which the ruined and broken hearted girl may have been driven, not to a premature and ignominious grave merely, but to an unending abode in hell ! And the wretch who brought down upon her this temporal and eternal blight, may by timely penitence, have secured for himself an abode among the blest ! What, too, must he think of a doctrine which peoples heaven with parents bereaved for ever of their children, and children of their parents, which sunders for eternity those sacred ties by which the God of nature has bound human beings together ; and which have for their prototype the relation which he himself bears to every sentient creature of his power ? Which, I would ask him, is the more cheering and consistent view to indulge relative to futurity ; that which implies a frustration of God's designs in creation, and that men will possess in eternity the dispositions and qualities which characterise them here ; or that all the plans and purposes of Jehovah respecting our race shall be fully consummated ; and all mankind, saved from sin—reconciled to God and each other—assimilated to the divine nature, shall attain to that glory and felicity which is the end of their creation ? Let conscience and common sense candidly answer this question, ere an attempt is made to ridicule an universal futurity. Thus endeth my reply.

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have opportunity for making your peace with God, and will receive every aid in this business which it is in the power of the reverend clergymen to give you. Not such was the case with the unhappy woman whom you murdered ; she was hurried to the bar of heaven with all her sins upon her soul." Here then is a case in point : the unfortunate sister-in-law is to wail with the lost, and to behold her murderer rejoicing with the saved ! Wm. Gibbs, the pirate who was hung some years since at New-York, confessed that he had been accessory to the murder of 400 persons : these were murdered on the high seas, or upon our coasts : all acquainted with this class of persons know that they are usually not over-burthened with a concern about the future : it would therefore be speaking within bounds to say, that 350 out of the 400, were sent to eternity in impenitence, and doomed to an endless hell of course. The pirate, on the contrary, had space allowed him for repentance ; was attended upon by his priests, &c. (he was a catholic) and when led out to execution he expressed himself as if assured of forgiveness and a happy futurity. Fancy him now in heaven, looking down upon 350 of his victims in hell !

## POPULAR DEBATE.—No. III.

RELATIVE TO THE CLOSING PARAGRAPH OF MATTHEW XXV.

## UNIVERSALIAN VIEWS OF SAID PASSAGE.

I feel, my auditors, the magnitude of the task I have undertaken relative to the subject before us : it is two-fold in its nature ; first, to uproot from your minds prepossessions of long standing, and associated with your earliest remembrances : and secondly, to introduce and impress in their stead ideas entirely novel to you, and in contrariety to those entertained by full fifteen sixteenths of all christendom. Nevertheless, as I have in my own mind the utmost assurance of the *truth* of my views, and as I know the documents by which I am to sustain them to be clear and unequivocal, I enter upon the undertaking without the smallest solicitude as to the result ; requesting only that you will listen to, and weigh with impartial attention, all that shall be adduced on both sides. As my friend of the opposite faith is to follow in a review of my arguments, I shall not anticipate many of his objections ; but will attend to them, as they come from himself, in my rejoinder. “ When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory : And before him shall be gathered all nations ; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats : And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world : For I was a hungered, and ye gave me meat : I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink : I was a stranger, and ye took me in : naked, and ye clothed me : I was sick, and ye visited me : I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee a hungered, and fed *thee* ? or thirsty, and gave *thee* drink ? When saw we thee a stranger, and took *thee* in ? or naked, and clothed *thee* ? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee ? And the King shall answer and

say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on his left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was a hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee a hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily, I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did *it* not to one of the least of these, ye did *it* not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." (Mat. xxv. 31—46.)

1st.—I observe that there is no mention in the text of a reference to the future world; no intimation that the events it describes are to transpire subsequent to the resurrection; all this rests on the mere *assumption* of our opponents. On the contrary, the passage bears evidence on its face that its true and intended application is to *things of time*: this is what I propose to make apparent, in opposition to the generally received opinion, that it describes a judgment in eternity. Mark well the reading of the passage: "And before him shall be gathered all *nations*, and he shall separate *them* one from another." Separate whom? Every grammarian knows that *nations* is the antecedent to the pronoun *them* in this place; *nations*, then, are what are to be judged, and separated, at the time to which the text looks forward: this is a different thing entirely from the sort of judgment to which it is commonly applied; for that supposes that all the human family will be parcelled out, according to moral classification, and severed *individually* from one another: husband from wife, parent from child, &c. but nothing of the kind is intimated here. Are our opponents willing to abide a literal application of the text to a judgment in eternity? If so, we shall have the different nations of mankind severed from each other; and whilst some, *en masse*, are taken to heaven, others will be driven to hell! Surely they will not admit this as true; and yet on their own plan of exposition it most assuredly is, according to the grammatical import of the language.

2nd.—If this text describes an after-death judgment, it is plain that salvation will be awarded strictly on the ground of *works*! and this is contrary to the plain teaching of the bible, and to the avowed doctrine of every protestant church! “*For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat:*” &c. No mention made of faith, repentance, regeneration, or any other generally admitted prerequisite to salvation.

3d.—These features (not to mention others) of the text, demand for it an exposition different from that which is usually given; this I shall in all simplicity attempt. Observe then, that the subject matter of it is, *the coming of Christ in glory—accompanied by angels—the gathering of all nations—and the rewarding them according to their works.* Suppose now that it can be shown, that these events were to transpire within a third of a century from the time of Christ’s ascension: will not the popular views concerning it be at once refuted? Well, this is precisely what I propose to do.

4th.—See first, verses 30, 31, of the preceding chapter: “And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” Can it be denied that this is the identical coming noticed in my text? Mark well, then, the verses immediately succeeding, “Now learn a parable of the fig-tree, When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer *is* nigh: So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, *even* at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.” Here you have the time fixed by the solemn *asseveration* of Christ himself. And that you may be assured that this parallelism is not solitary, nor accidental, I will introduce Mark and Luke to the same point; in Mark xiii. 26—30, it reads as follows: “And then they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds, with great power and glory. And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven. Now, learn a parable of

the fig-tree; When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near: So ye, in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, *even* at the doors. Verily I say unto you, 'That this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done.' In Luke, chapter xxi. 28—32, the same is expressed in nearly the same terms: "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh. And he spake to them a parable; Behold the fig-tree, and all the trees; When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of yourselves that summer is nigh at hand. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away till all be fulfilled." Here are three distinct testimonies to the fact that the coming of Christ to judge the nations, was to take place within the then existing generation. Christ even proceeds to caution his disciples how to regulate their conduct with reference to that event; that it might not come upon them by surprise; which clearly implies that they should live to witness it. "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come on you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." (Luke xxi. 34—6.) It would at once astonish and amuse you, my auditors, to know how erudite commentators have strained their learning and ingenuity in order to reconcile these passages with their pre-conceived opinion, that the coming of Christ is to ensue at the end of time. Dr. Clarke even carries his efforts at evasion so far as to affirm, that by "this generation," Christ may have meant *that race of people*, viz., the Jews: that they should not become extinct as a nation before he should come to judge the world! But this is pitiful, yea contemptible: for—

5th.—The same evangelists have recorded another declaration of Christ to the same effect, and in phraseology which will not bear such an interpretation; and, besides, the contexts of the different passages already quoted make it clearly manifest, that the



word *generation* was used by the Saviour to denote, *the people of that age*. "For *these*," said he, "be the days of vengeance, that all things that are written may be fulfilled:" (Luke xxi. 22.) again, at the close of his description of Jerusalem's overthrow, he proceeds to tell that his coming shall be "*immediately* after the tribulation of those days;" (Mat. xxv. 29.) and in Mark xiii, the same is repeated in another form, "But *in those days*, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken: and *then* they shall see the son of man coming in the clouds of heaven:" &c. (24—26.) and his caution to his disciples immediately follows, implying, as before remarked, that his coming was to take place in their day, for they are told to look for their Lord; "lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping." (36.) And yet grave and erudite biblical critics inform us, that (although eighteen centuries are since elapsed) this event is yet to transpire! But we will look at other scriptural testimonies.

See, first, Mat. xvi. "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works. Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." (27, 28.) What think you now? Did Christ's appearance in his glory, to reward and punish, occur in that age; or are some that were then among his auditors still living on the earth? To the same purpose speaks Mark, "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels." (viii. 38.) "And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power." (ix. 1.) And Luke, "For whosoever shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and *in his* Father's, and of the holy angels. But I tell you of a truth, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God." (ix. 26, 27.) Surely testimonies so emphatic, and repeated, should be admitted

by all as sufficient to settle the question as to *the time* of Christ's coming : but there are yet others to be adduced.

There has ever been a difference of opinion amongst biblical commentators, as to *the date* at which the book of Revelation was written ; some placing it previous, and others subsequent, to the great calamities which befel the Jewish people. To my thinking, the book contains clear *internal* evidence that the *former* is the correct position : for the city, and temple are several times alluded to as still standing, which would not have been the case had it been written subsequent to their destruction. Indeed the main subject matters of the book seem most evidently to be, the ruin impending over the Jewish people ; the destruction of their civil and ecclesiastical polity, and the trials and eventual establishment of the christian church. In the introduction, we are told that the object of these revelations from God was, " to show unto his servants things *which must shortly come to pass.*" (i. 1.) The coming of Christ in the clouds is also mentioned. (i. 7.) And, moreover, the writer is commanded, " Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book, for **THE TIME IS AT HAND ;**" (xxii. 10.) to which is added, " He that is unjust, let him be unjust still : and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still : and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still : &c. And, behold, **I COME QUICKLY ;** and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." (11, 12.) And it is further added, " He which testifieth these things saith, **SURELY I COME QUICKLY.**" (20.) Here then is additional evidence as to the time of our Lord's second coming. Is still more required ? More shall be furnished.

This same event is predicted by the prophet Malachi, under the description of " the day that shall burn as an oven," (iv. 1.) and " the great, and dreadful day of the Lord ;" (5.) and it is declared that Elias the prophet was to be sent before its arrival, who should " turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers." (6.) The Jews understood this as pointing to the time when Messiah should set up his kingdom, and therefore settled it in their minds that this event should be preceded by the coming of Elias the prophet. See to this point Mark, ix. " And they asked him, saying, Why say the scribes that Elias must first come ? And he answered and told

them, Elias verily cometh first, and restoreth all things ; and how it is written of the Son of man, that he must suffer many things, and be set at nought. But I say unto you, That Elias is indeed come, and they have done unto him whatsoever they listed, as it is written of him." (11, 12, 13.) When John the Baptist's birth was predicted, it was said, " He shall go forth in the power and spirit of Elias, to turn the hearts of the children to the fathers ;" &c. (Luke i. 17.) and in reference to the self-same personage Christ says, " If ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come." (Mat. xi. 14.) These co-relative texts afford us a clear indication of the time when " the great and terrible day of the Lord" should transpire : and in Acts, ii. we get some further light upon it, for Peter quotes from the prophet Joel the signs which should precede " the great and notable day of the Lord ;" and he declares that these were actually then taking place. (16—20.) It were superfluous to add to this mass of evidence : it would not be saying too much to affirm, that no one scriptural fact is more lucidly set forth than this, viz., that Christ's coming to judge the nations, *in the sense intended in the text*, was an event close at hand when the language of the text was spoken.

6th.—We come now to the question, (a complex question) What are we to understand by the coming of Christ—what were its objects—and what were the literal circumstances ensuent upon it ? I answer directly : first, that Christ's coming is not to be understood as *actual*, or *real* ; but as *allegorical*. Secondly, Its objects were to punish the Jewish people for their wickedness and obstinacy ; to abolish their ecclesiastical establishment ; and to establish a pure and spiritual church in its stead. Thirdly, the events ensuent upon that coming, were a train of signal and terrible judgments upon the Jewish nation, including the entire destruction of their temple ; their complete subjugation and dispersion by the Roman power ; and their ejection from the church (frequently called *kingdom*) of God ; and the induction of the Gentiles into that church, or kingdom in their room. These great, and momentous facts, constitute the sum of what is figuratively set forth in the text. In scripture times men (Jews especially) were wont to be very lavish in their use of *hyperbole* ; hence we find them frequently describing events, of comparatively small consequence, in such terms as would lead a person unac-

quainted with their style, to imagine that something was intended very far beyond even the most stupendous occurrences of life. Christ, in the text, has conformed to this usage of his countrymen, which circumstance has led thousands (including many of piety and learning) to suppose that it looks forward to events beyond the precincts of time.

Now for the proof of my positions, I will first quote from Luke, xxi. as these matters are more distinctly set forth by him than by the other evangelists. "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But wo unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud, with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh. And he spake unto them a parable; Behold the fig-tree, and all the trees; When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away till all be fulfilled." (20—32.) I only ask of you, my friends, that you will closely scrutinise this language; many an erudite scholiast, with mind preoccupied with the fantasies of his creed, has been sadly puzzled here: puzzled, because he was predetermined to find that the language respects a coming of Christ to judge men at the close of time; and as nothing of the kind is even intimated, he has

thrown himself back in his easy-chair, stroked his gray wig, and consoled himself with the conclusion "Ha, ha! I see now, the passage has a two-fold meaning; the one expressed, the other understood; the destruction of the Jewish city and temple is the former, the great judgment at the conclusion of time is the latter. Yes, yes; the one is made the antetype of the other. I see it now; well, I will so put it down." And accordingly, we have been over and over again favored with this assumption, in behalf of which we cannot be pointed to one particle of evidence!

Daniel the prophet had predicted the very events to which our text refers. (ix. 26, 27.) "And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city, and the sanctuary; and the end thereof *shall be* with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make *it* desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate." And again in chapter xii. he represents Messiah under the name of Michael, "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation *even* to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book:" (1.) and the prophet designates (in enigmatical terms) the precise time of these momentous transactions, "And from the time *that* the daily *sacrifice* shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, *there shall be* a thousand two hundred and ninety days." (11.) Christ, in his description of these coming calamities, alluded to, and confirms what Daniel had said about 500 years before. See Mat. xxiv. "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth let him understand,) Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains: Let him which is on the house-top not come down to take any thing out of his house: Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And wo unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days!

But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath-day: For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." (15—21.) And as if still more clearly to point out the identity of the time of his coming, with that of Jerusalem's overthrow by the Roman armies, he immediately blends with his account of the former, an allusion to the national ensign of the latter, i. e. the figure of an *eagle* upon their standards. "For as the lightning cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together." (27, 28.) And he then emphatically adds, "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." (29, 30.) IMMEDIATELY, &c.

It must be borne in mind, that the Jews were in those days regarded as God's peculiar people; they had, for nearly twenty centuries, maintained a peculiar politico-ecclesiastical establishment, which claimed Jehovah himself as its institutor. This, in the new testament, is sometimes alluded to under the appellation of the "kingdom of God," and the Jews are termed the "children of the kingdom," being by their peculiar religion isolated from the other nations of the earth, they held them in contempt, termed them "Gentiles," and deemed themselves defiled in case of personal communion with them. (John xviii. 28. Acts xi. 3.) To this favored people, Christ for a time confined his ministry; he even enjoined his disciples, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any of the cities of the Samaritans enter ye not, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Mat. x. 5, 6.) The Jews were considered as exclusively entitled to the divine favor, the extending any share thereof to the Gentiles was regarded as the taking the children's bread and casting it to the dogs. (Mark vii. 27.) Such was the order of things in Christ's day, but the time was nearly arrived which was to witness its reversal, the Jews were on the eve of being ejected from the

kingdom, and the Gentiles of being inducted into it in their stead. "I will call them my people which were not my people, and her beloved which was not beloved; and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, ye are not my people, there shall they be called the children of the living God." (Rom. ix. 25, 26.) This very prophecy was on the verge of fulfilment; hence, when a Roman centurion, (captain of a hundred men,) applied to Christ, and expressed strong confidence in his ability to heal his servant, the saviour seemed surprised at the degree of faith manifested by a mere heathen, and he took occasion to intimate the fact, that the Gentiles should soon be seen coming from the north and the south, the east and the west, and sitting down in the kingdom, or church of God, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, whilst they themselves, "the children of the kingdom," (as he elsewhere says,) should be *thrust out*. (Mat. viii. 11, 12. Luke xiii. 28, 29.) The patriarchs and prophets, it seems, were considered as having exercised an evangelical faith in Christ's messiahship, and were therefore accounted members of his church or kingdom, and all who in a true sense become his disciples are regarded as coheritors with them of the same gospel blessing: as saith Paul, "So then, they that be of faith ARE blessed with faithful Abraham." (Gal. iii. 9.)

This is the *Abraham's bosom*, to which the poor man in the parable (by whom are personated the gentile nations) "was carried by angels." The Greek word *angelos* signifies *messengers*, or *agents*, and as often *human* messengers as *spiritual*;\* to be "car-

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\* The *angels* of the seven churches in Asia Minor, referred to in the 2nd and 3rd chapters of Revelations, were the *ministers* of those churches. The three angels who appeared to Abraham (Gen. xvii.) are called men, and such they undoubtedly were, for they ate and drank with the patriarch, and washed their feet, agreeably to the custom of the times. The "angel of the Lord" that appeared to Cornelius, is also called "a man." (Acts x.) We must not take for granted, therefore, when the word angels occurs in the scriptures, that spiritual beings are always meant, although they doubtless often are. "The angels which kept not their first estate," (Jude ver. 6.) are usually (though without scriptural warrant) understood as being celestial beings who fell from the realms of blessedness, all which is sheer fiction. We are not justified in assuming that any such event ever took place; the bible nowhere declares it. The account in Revelations (xii.) of a "war in heaven," must not be understood of the world of bliss; heaven, there, means the church, (as it often elsewhere does.) In the same chapter we are told of a *dragon* in heaven, and of a pregnant woman, and of her flight into the wilderness, and of a serpent spouting out a flood of water after her, and of the earth taking part with her against the serpent, &c. Surely they must have a marvelous love for the ridiculous, who fancy these facts to have transpired above! and yet this is prominent amongst the texts adduced to support the doctrine concerning fallen angels; because it happens to be said that the tail of the dragon drew down a third part of the stars of heaven *to the earth*, (but not *to hell*, observe.) Truth is, as before shown, all these things pertain to the conflicts which the church had to sustain with its enemies, in the early days of its

ried by angels to Abraham's bosom," may therefore mean, to be conducted by the ministry of Christ's apostles or ministers into the true faith of Christ. The gentiles might well be likened to a poor man, covered with sores, for spiritually considered, their condition was deplorable enough. By the "rich man" is meant the Jewish nation, which for centuries had abounded in all spiritual privileges, in this sense "they fared sumptuously every day," and, in the persons of their priesthood, were literally clad "in purple and fine linen." But this people were doomed soon to *die* to all these distinctive privileges, and to lift up their eyes in *hades*, (which literally means *the grave*, or *the unseen state*, but figuratively, *moral or civil degradation*,) in this degraded and condemned state they were to see the gentiles elevated to the high distinction and privileges from which they themselves had fallen, and from this happy and privileged state they were to find themselves separated by an impassable *gulf*. What constituted this *great gulf* we are more than once informed: viz., the blindness of mind, and the obstinate unbelief, to which that people were judicially given over. "Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with *their* eyes, nor understand with *their* heart, and be converted, and I should heal them." (John xii. 39, 40.) Paul also testifies to the same fact. "What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded: (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear) unto this day." (Rom. xi. 7, 8.) Christ represents Abraham as saying in regard to them, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead," which was literally true, for Christ had actually raised one Lazarus to life, and they yet remained as unbelieving as before, and they so continued even after Christ himself had risen. Eighteen centuries have since elapsed, and the gulf seems as impassable as ever: the gospel is progressively subduing to itself the subjects of all other religions, the gentiles from the ends of the earth are flocking into Christ's kingdom,

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establishment; and also to the overthrow of the Jewish ecclesiastical polity about the same time. The popular misconception of those texts may be mainly ascribed to the epic of Milton, who was a great admirer of mythological lore.



but the Jews remain still in outer darkness: degraded, and oppressed, they lift up their eyes in hades, being in torment, and they see the formerly despised gentiles in Abraham's bosom, to whom they in their spiritual lifetime denied the crumbs which fell from their table.

Pass we next to the parable of the supper, which a certain king made on the occasion of his son's wedding; this is clearly applicable to the same events: the Jews are the party first invited, who on various grounds excused themselves from complying; the servants were then commanded to go into the highways and hedges, and to *compel* all they should find, both bad and good, into the wedding: these represent the gentiles, who, morally considered, were poor, and maimed, and halt, and blind. The party first invited are represented as having made light of the invitation, and committed personal outrage upon the servants sent to call them; which refers to the persecutions of the prophets and apostles by the Jewish people; whereupon the king sends "his armies," to "destroy those murderers and burn up their city:" which clearly implies that God was soon about to fulfil the same retribution upon the Jews by the Roman army. (Mat. xxii. 2.)

The parable of the virgins likewise represents the gospel institution under the figure of a wedding; the coming of Christ to establish his kingdom in the world, and to minister judgments to its enemies, is set forth in the coming of the bridegroom: this should ensue at midnight, whilst "they all slumbered and slept," which corresponds with the account Christ uniformly gave of his coming, that it should "be in an hour when they looked not for him." Paul notifies his brethren of the same fact. "For yourselves know perfectly, that the day of the Lord cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." (1 Thes. v. 2—4.) The wise virgins represent those who looked for this coming, and, whilst the term of grace lasted, prepared themselves to enter with Christ into the gospel gates; the foolish virgins denote those who by reason of a neglect of this preparation were shut out, and were doomed to share in the calamities of the time: the "wailing and gnashing of teeth," the

"outer darkness," the famine, pestilence, sword, captivity, and other evils, by which that dreadful era was distinguished. From these evils the believing part of that people were saved. Christ repeatedly declared that those who should become his disciples should escape these troubles, and we have historic testimony that they actually did escape them: the saviour, however, said "that except those days should be shortened there could no flesh be saved;" but he adds, "but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." (Mat. xxiv. 22.) Peter, in reference to the same period, says, "For the time *is come* that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if *it* first *begin* at us, what shall the end *be* of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" (1 Pet. iv. 17, 18.) Dr. Adam Clarke, and other eminent commentators, admit that this language has especial reference to the above mentioned events, and, indeed, there is evidence of the fact on the face of the passage. "The time *is come*," &c., not *is coming*, some thousands of years hence, as the popular theology supposes.

To the same effect are the parables of the tares and the wheat, and the net cast into the sea; "at the end of the world (*ton aionion*, end of the age or mosaic dispensation), the tares were to be gathered from amongst the wheat, and cast into a furnace of fire; but the wheat itself, was to be gathered into the master's barn; at the same time, the bad fishes in the net, were to be taken from the good, and thrown away, whilst the good were to be put into vessels for preservation. (Mat. xiii.) It is a common practice to refer this passage to the literal termination of this world, but such is obviously not the scriptural meaning of the phrase, "end of the world," it never requires such an interpretation, but, on the contrary, invariably means the consummation of the Jewish economy. Paul calls the period at which Christ died, "the end of the world;" (Heb. ix. 26.) and he also applies the same phrase to the days in which he and his fellow apostles lived. (1 Cor. x. 11.) The Jews, Dr. Clarke and others inform us, were in the habit of dividing time into two grand epochs, viz. the mosaic age, and the age of the messiah. Keeping this fact in mind, we shall easily understand Christ's meaning with regard to the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, which "shall not be forgiven in

this world (or age), neither in the world (or age) to come ;” “but is in danger of eternal damnation.” Literally, the damnation, or condemnation, of the age ; referring, without doubt, to the fearful judgments then near impending over those blasphemers, who imputed the miracles which Christ wrought, by the spirit of God, to the influence, or agency, of Beelzebub. The “furnace of fire,” mentioned in the parable of the tares, we are not to assume means the fancied infernal regions ; the scriptures, (which are ever the best expounders of themselves) say of God, “his fire is in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem :” (Isaiah xxxi. 9.) and Malachi, as before quoted, designates the period of these very judgments as, “the day that shall burn as an oven.” The temple, so great and splendid, and the larger part of the city, were converted into a mass of flame, and might very properly therefore, in figurative language, be represented under the figure of “a furnace of fire.” Thousands of the Jews perished in the flames, and, according to Josephus, more than a million perished from different causes during the siege. “Then,” said the saviour, “shall be great tribulation, such as never was since the beginning of the creation which God created, until that self-same time, no, *nor never shall be.*” (Mat. xxiv. 21, Mark xiii. 19.)

The saviour contrived on one occasion, to draw a just sentence of condemnation against this people, out of their own mouths : he told them of a certain man who planted a vineyard, and let it out to husbandmen that they might dress it ; he sent his servants in due season to demand his portion of the vintage : but they evilly entreated the servants, beating some and stoning others, (with which collate “O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee ;”) last of all he sent his son, and they consummated their wickedness by plotting against his life also. “When the Lord of that vineyard cometh,” inquired the saviour, “what will he do unto those husbandmen ?” His auditors, probably not dreaming of an application of the case to themselves, replied “He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out *his* vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons. Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner : this is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in

our eyes? Therefore I say unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." (Mat. xxi. 41—43.) It is added, "And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them." (ib. 45.)

We find, indeed, that Jesus seized upon every fitting occasion for communicating these stupendous matters to his countrymen, not, to be sure, in plain language, for they would not have borne it, he would thus have enraged them against him, and the catastrophe of his death would have been hastened before the other great objects of his mission were fulfilled: he therefore chose a mode of communication always popular with the Jews, and, indeed, with all oriental nations, which consisted in relating fictitious incidents, in which was couched some important moral or fact, to be guessed out as best it might, by the party to whom it applied. But another reason must be here acknowledged why Christ resorted so much to allegory in his discourses to the Jews. It was God's design that his son should be rejected by that nation generally, and that their rejection of the gospel should be made the occasion for offering it to the gentiles. Let any one who doubts this take Christ's own account of the matter: "And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." (Mat. xiii. 10, 11.) The end of God in this mysterious business was, nevertheless, merciful—merciful both to the receiving and to the rejecting party, as Paul very satisfactorily shows. "I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but *rather* through their fall salvation *is* come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. Now, if the fall of them *be* the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?" (Rom. xi. 11, 12.) And again, "For if the casting away of them *be* the reconciling of the world, what *shall* the receiving of *them* *be*, but life from the dead?" (ib. 15.) Once more, "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, (lest ye should be wise in your own conceits,) that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." (ib. 25.) "And so all Israel shall be saved."

The fact of the opening of the gospel gates to the gentiles was first made known to Peter, in a vision well adapted in its character to symbolize the event : he saw a sheet let down from heaven, knit at the four corners, and containing all manners of living things, and among them many which were accounted unclean by the Mosaic code : a voice came to him, " Rise, Peter, kill and eat," but he replied, " Not so, Lord, for I have never eaten any thing common or unclean." So inveterate indeed were his Jewish prejudices that the vision had to be three times repeated, and he three times told not to call any thing common which God had cleansed, before he could be convinced. It is remarkable in this transaction, that all those creatures, both clean and unclean, are represented as being let down from heaven, and lifted up into heaven again : which would seem to imply the fact (in several forms intimated in the inspired record) that as all originally came from God, so all must eventually return to him. " God hath shown me," said Peter, " that I must call no man common or unclean ;" and, accordingly, he began straightway to proclaim the way of life to the gentiles. His christian brethren (being all Jews by nation) were shocked at his liberality ; being as yet, ignorant of the affair which brought it about : he therefore rehearsed the whole matter to them from the beginning, telling them how signally the word had been blest to Cornelius' household, and they, convinced that the hand of God was in the business, rejoiced, and glorified God, saying, " then hath God also unto the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." (Acts x.) From that time forward the gentiles' cities became the principal theatres of gospel operation, and oh ! how the tidings of great joy to all people ran and triumphed ! The Jews became more rancorous than ever *in* their opposition : not content with rejecting it themselves, they sought to obstruct its progress among the gentiles ; they followed them with persecutions from city to city, " contradicting and blaspheming." " Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you : but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles : For so hath the Lord commanded us, *saying*, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldst be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. And when the Gentiles heard

this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord : and as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed. And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region. But the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts. But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium. And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost.” (Acts viii. 46—52.) See also to the same effect, Acts xxviii. The scene there described, took place at Rome, and the members of a Jewish synagogue in that city were the party addressed. “Go unto this people, and say, Hearing, ye shall hear, and shall not understand ; and seeing, ye shall see, and not perceive : For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed ; lest they should see with *their* eyes, and hear with *their* ears, and understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and *that* they will hear it. And when he had said these words, the Jews departed, and had great reasoning among themselves.” (26—29.)

I flatter myself that the parables of Chist, in the light of this application of them, are changed from obscure and unintelligible enigmas, into beautiful and pertinent representations of fact. I am persuaded that no one of them was ever intended to represent the eternal affairs of mankind, and the popular attempt to apply them in that manner, has but served to strip them of their point and beauty.

Before I close I will briefly answer the argument founded on the *antithesis* in the last verse of the passage under consideration. “These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.” I grant that the same Greek adjective which qualifies the life of the righteous, also qualifies the punishment of the wicked—what then ? must the things thus contrasted necessarily be of the same duration ? I could certainly produce many scriptural antitheses in which the contrasted terms are not equivalent to each other : neither will it be safe to assume that the same adjective when applied to different things in the same connexion, must always be allowed the same strength of meaning ;

for by this rule I could prove the *hills and mountains* equal in duration to the *ways of God*: “The *everlasting* mountains were scattered, the *perpetual* hills did bow, his ways are *everlasting*.” (Hab. iii. 6.) Here is the same word occurring three times in a verse, and requiring an infinite signification in one instance, and a limited meaning in the other two. If it even be allowed, however, that the antithetical terms in Matthew are of equal signification, it will not thence follow that the *punishment* was to be endless, except it can be proven that the *life* was to be so: but this will not be undertaken by any one who has observed the new testament usage of the phrase *eternal life*: this expression does not refer to the immortal existence of the future state, but the divine renovation of mind enjoyed by believers in the gospel. “This is life eternal, that men may know thee, the only, true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent;” (John xvii. 2.) and he that hath this knowledge, “HATH everlasting life—IS PASSED from death unto life.” (John iii. 36.) It was precisely to the state of blindness, ignorance, and condemnation, contrasted with this state of gospel life, that the Jewish rejectors of Christ were adjudged. Now if the everlasting life possessed by the believer be no more than an *endless*, or an *immortal* existence, wherein is he distinguished from the unbeliever, for the latter will also exist immortally? It must be obvious, that the term eternal, when connected with life in the scriptures, has reference to the divine nature or quality of that life, and not to its duration.

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#### STRICTURES ON THE FOREGOING.

My dear travellers to eternity, this is an inquiry of awful magnitude—one which ought to engage our most serious consideration. I have always regarded this portion of scripture as a description of the last judgment, in which the fates of men will be settled for eternity: but a gentleman who preceded me has employed much ingenuity and a most fatal ability for wresting the scriptures, for the purpose of showing that the passage before us has no such meaning: to unravel and expose all his ingenious sophistry surpasses my powers, for he has in his argument so dexterously blended what is false with what is true, that it would

task the keenest discrimination to analyse and exhibit them separately. Without attempting, therefore, a labored review of his entire argument, I shall confine myself to the office of pointing out its principal defects.

1st.—He argued that the separation spoken of in the text, is a separation of *nations*, not of *individuals* according to moral classification; I admit that a strict grammatical analysis of the language would favor this view; but it cannot be that Christ intended any such meaning, for we do not find whole nations to be righteous, nor whole nations to be wicked, and therefore nations, as such, are not liable to reward, or punishment; but the good and bad individuals in each will, in the great day, be dealt with according to their respective doings in life.

2nd.—Before he can prove that the “fire prepared for the devil and his angels,” is a circumstance of time, he must prove that the devil and his angels are inhabitants of this world; but this he cannot do. He tells us, to be sure, that the devil means simply *an adversary*, and that the term angels, means *messengers* or *agents*, and that both these terms are applied frequently to human beings. All this I grant; but still I find devils spoken of in the scriptures in reference to fallen spiritual beings, once angels of light, but now degraded from their beatified state—their leader is by the prophet Isaiah called “Lucifer, son of the morning.” Christ tells us concerning him, that “he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in truth.” These devils used to possess men in the days of the saviour, and we have accounts of their speaking, tearing people, throwing them into the fire, and water: they also entered into a herd of swine, and caused them to drown themselves in the sea. In Revelation we are told about a war in heaven between the angelic and infernal hosts; and of the latter being overcome, and chained down in the pit of perdition. Yet universalists tell us that the terms devil, Satan, Beelzebub, and the like, are but figures of speech—mere personifications—evil principles—diseases—afflictions, &c., invested with ideal personality! I, on the contrary, with all orthodox christians, maintain that these terms belong to a class of evil beings; once angels of light, but now arrayed in deadly hostility against God and the souls of men. Let my opponent disprove this view if he can.



3d.—I affirm, that no such coming, as is described in the text, has ever yet come to pass. *Did* the saviour descend in clouds during the lifetime of those who heard him speak? *Did* he actually gather before him all nations? Did the stars fall from heaven? Does history furnish a record of any such events? Surely not; the heavens and the earth still endure as formerly; we have ocular evidence that no such events as were to accompany the coming of Christ, have ever yet occurred. What follows then? It follows that said coming is not already past, but is yet to take place. Our friend must not hope to argue us out of our eyes and ears.

4th.—I admit the destruction of Jerusalem to be the main theme of Mat. xxiv, yet I insist that it has also a reference to a general judgment at the close of time; this will appear evident if we attend to the inquiries of the disciples at the beginning of the chapter: "And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to *him*, for to show him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, his disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what *shall be* the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" (1—3.) Here we find questions relative to three great events. 1st.—The destruction of the temple. 2nd.—The *sign* of his coming to judge the world: and 3rd, the end of time, when said coming shall actually take place. To each of these inquiries the chapter contains a distinct answer. True, we cannot point to the precise line, or verse, where the answer to one of these questions closes, and that to the next in order begins; the transitions from one to the other are so sudden, and the language applied to all so bold and so similar, that many have been led into the mistake of supposing, that these events were to happen simultaneously, or at least in rapid succession. Into this very blunder the universalists have fallen: hence they tell us that Christ's second coming has already transpired, and that we of this day, have no further concern with it than as a matter of sacred history!

5th.—I scarcely know how to approach the novel, (and, I will own, ingenious,) application of the parables, with which we

have been entertained: I acknowledge it was smoothly and plausibly spun out; I shall not attempt a formal refutation of it; it ought to suffice as proof of its incorrectness that it is opposed to seven eighths of all christendom, in past and present ages. However, as his cause obtains much apparent scriptural countenance from this mode of applying these beautiful allegories, I will endeavour to maintain the old ground, by pointing out those parts of his attempt which were particularly lame and objectionable.

And first comes up the subject of *the rich man and Lazarus*—the last passage in the bible which I should have dreamed of hearing applied to favor universalism! but what will not human ingenuity attempt? Now I will quash at once my opponent's plausible use of this text, by showing that it is not a parable at all, but a literal narration of fact. It is not introduced as parables usually are—it is not prefaced with the remark, “and he spake a parable unto them;” or “the kingdom of heaven is likened unto,” &c. On the contrary, Christ directly says, “There was a certain rich man.” On which, with Mr. Wesley, and others, I argue, “there *was* such a person, or there *was not*: if there was, then is the passage a plain recital of fact; if there was not, it follows that Christ asserted a falsehood.” I defy my opponent to extricate himself from this dilemma! Another thing deserving notice in this connexion is, that Josephus, in his dissertation concerning *Hades*, (the *hell* to which the rich man went) describes it in a manner extremely corroborative of the orthodox views concerning this terrible text: he must be regarded as the highest authority for Jewish opinions in the days of the saviour: and according to him, Hades contained the souls of all the dead, both good and bad, and is to continue as a receptacle of them until the last judgment; when the good will be admitted to Paradise, and the bad doomed to flames for eternity: meanwhile these are now kept separate by an impassable gulf. How exactly accordant with the saviour's account of the post-mortem condition of the rich man and Lazarus! And oh! my friends, that gulf! that dreadful gulf! which cuts off to the damned all hope of escape forever! Universalism can construct no bridge across it which will not crumble under a lost spirit's tread. Let me entreat you not to rest your hopes on any such air-built superstructure!

I notice next *the ten virgins*—which I admit is a parable, and

also that one of its meanings belongs to the present time ; it relates to Christ's church or kingdom in this world : but besides this, there is a higher and more awful view to be taken of it—it looks forward to the coming of Christ in the last and final judgment. The same may be said of the parable of the *marriage supper* : my opponent has noticed but one of its applications ; he, moreover, has failed to note a circumstance connected with it, of very great consequence ; I allude to the case of the man “ who had not on a wedding garment.” Why was this overlooked ? Did my opponent find it too hard for his ingenuity ? “ And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding-garment : And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having on a wedding-garment ? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast *him* into outer darkness ; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” (Mat. xxii. 11—13.) From this we learn the important truth, that except we in this life attain a preparation for heaven, we shall have no admission to that blissful abode hereafter.

My opponent has very plausibly disposed of the argument raised on the fact, that the same Greek term is employed to qualify both the life of the righteous and the punishment of the wicked ; but unfortunately for his cause, whilst his sophistry was employed in disproving the endless duration of the latter, it at the same time disproved that of the former. Eternal life must end if eternal punishment shall ! This one consequence of his reasoning is sufficient for its refutation : he professes to believe in endless happiness beyond the grave ; I defy him to bring forward any warrant for it from the scriptures, in stronger or more unequivocal terms than are therein applied to future punishment.

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#### REJOINDER.

I sincerely thank my friend for the conciseness and explicitness of his objections, it shall not be the fault of my will if my replies are not equally concise and explicit. 1st.—He grants the grammatical correctness of the criticism on the text, which makes *nations* (not individuals) the parties arraigned and separated in the

judgment that it foretells ; yet he thinks Christ could not have designed what his language fairly means ! This, in effect, is to accuse him of not having known how to express his meaning ! Nations, too, he tells us, are not punished, as such, for their wickedness. He certainly has not learned this from the bible, for it teaches not only that “ the wicked shall be turned into hell,” but also, “ and all the *nations* that forget God.” Not the bible alone, but all history informs us that there is such a thing as national guilt, and that this is sure to draw down national punishment.

2nd.—I must prove, he thinks, in order to make good my application of this passage, that “ the devil and his angels” of which it speaks, are not fallen spiritual beings ; and that the “ everlasting fire prepared” for them, is not the fire of a hell beyond the bounds of earth. Nay, I think it does not fairly fall to my part to prove this ; it is all assumed as fact by popular theologians, it is their business to make it good by substantial evidence. As to the idea of lapsed spirits from heaven, called devils, it is too ridiculous for sober consideration : my opponent must admit that the different terms so rendered *often* refer to beings and things of this earth : I contend that they *always* do, (if we may except the terms relating to *demons*—a popular heathen superstition, which supposed that the souls of deceased persons wandered about the earth, and entered into men and women, causing disease, madness, &c. : the Jews in our saviour’s time had adopted this chimera,) hence we read of deaf devils, dumb devils, lunatic devils, leprous devils, etc. Seven devils were cast out of Mary Magdalene. One poor fellow who applied to Christ for relief supposed himself possessed of a legion of them, (a whole battalion,) and when these were exorcised and permitted to enter into a herd of pigs, they affected the pigs with a species of madness (not hydrophobia, certainly) which caused them to run down a declivity into the sea. Most usually, however, these terms are used with reference to human adversaries. Christ once called Judas a devil, and Peter he termed Satan : it is therefore not unreasonable to understand “ the devil and his angels” to mean the chief enemy of Christ’s gospel, and his agents or instruments : and the “ fire prepared” for them to mean, the terrible retributions with which they were soon to be visited. We are told in Revelations of a war in heaven, “ Michael and his angels fought

against the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels." Blind indeed must be the mind, to which it is not evident from the whole connexion, that "heaven" here means the church, and "the dragon and his angels" the enemies of the gospel, acting under some great leader! for the same account speaks of a woman in heaven, who brought forth a man child, and who fled into the wilderness from the persecutions of the dragon (all this *in heaven*, mind you!) which vomited forth water after her, "and the earth helped the woman," etc. On which highly figurative account (so manifestly relating to the church, its conflicts and final triumph) is erected the edifice of monstrous absurdity about a pitched fight, which took place between contending armies of angels before time began! That these crude notions are even yet common amongst Christians is evidence that the sacred volume has been studied to but little purpose.\*

3rd.—"I affirm," quoth my opponent, "that no such coming as is predicted in the text has ever yet transpired." Then, my friend, you affirm that Christ has proven a false prophet! for have I not furnished proof upon proof, that he positively declared it should take place within that generation, and within the lifetime of some of his auditors? Our friend's mistake, however, arises from the want of an acquaintance with the style of speaking then in general use: he understands every thing in a gross or literal sense; and so, as history relates nothing of the sun having been quenched—the stars having fallen—all nations having been actual-

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\* I will give another text often referred to, that my readers may see on what questionable ground the popular doctrine of a devil is made to stand. "And it shall come to pass in the day that the Lord shall give thee rest from thy sorrow, and from thy fear, and from the hard bondage wherein thou wast made to serve, That thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased! The Lord hath broken the staff of the wicked, and the sceptre of the rulers. He who smote the people in wrath with a continual stroke, he that ruled the nations in anger is persecuted, and none hindereth. The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet: they break forth into singing. Yea, the fir-trees rejoice at thee, and the cedars of Lebanon, saying, Since thou art laid down, no feller is come up against us. Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations. All they shall speak and say unto thee, Art thou also become weak as we? art thou become like unto us? Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noise of thy viols: the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee. How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!" (Isaiah xiv. 3—12.) Here you have it, reader; here is that fallen angel that has so long been a bug-bear in christendom: but here we have him dead and buried, and therefore shorn of his power, as one would naturally suppose: he is said, however, to be capable of such a variety of metamorphoses, that it were well to keep a sharp look out for him nevertheless.

ly congregated together before some real and visible judgment-seat, it is clear, he thinks, that all this is yet to take place. Nor is he without company in this error; many erudite theologians of high title, and most reverend wig, have erred from the same cause. The sacred writers were much accustomed to the use of the figure called *hyperbole*; which consists in describing a subject in an exaggerated manner, employing very bold imagery. See, for example, Isaiah's account of the destruction of Babylon by the Medes. "Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven, and the constellations thereof, shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. And I will punish the world for *their* evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir. Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the LORD of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger. And it shall be as the chased roe, and as a sheep that no man taketh up; they shall every man turn to his own people, and flee every one into his own land." (Isaiah xiii. 9—14.) This is the prediction of a mere temporal overthrow, but how glowingly described! The earth was to run away like a timid deer before the hunter! Now, to employ my friend's mode of reasoning here, I might argue that the destruction of Babylon is an event yet to take place; for the earth has not yet so run like a frightened sheep from its orbit, nor have the luminaries of heaven been extinguished. Truth is, that if we adopt this sort of logic we shall arrive at most marvelous and contradictory conclusions from different parts of the scriptures: and we should also be forcing upon them a meaning which they were never meant to bear. Our friend, by consulting the several commentators upon Mat. xxiv, and its parables, will find that even the most orthodox of them have been forced into concessions which favor my application. For example: Dr. Clarke, remarks that the coming of Christ "in his glory," may mean his spiritual presence in the preaching, and miracles, by which the gospel dispensation was

ushered in: his "gathering before him all nations," may mean the assembling of the Jewish tribes on some festival occasion, (as was the case on the day of pentecost; and as was also the case (according to Josephus and others,) when Jerusalem was besieged by Titus Vespasian :) his "holy angels," may mean his apostles and other inspired evangelists; "the great sound of a trumpet," may refer to the preaching of the gospel, by which means the "elect were gathered together," or, in other words, believers were brought into his church or kingdom, etc. Such is a specimen of concessions made by commentators opposed to myself on the general question between us, and they are the more to be relied on for that very reason.

4th.—Let us now look at the three questions put to Christ by his disciples, as he sat upon the mount of Olives. First. "When shall these things be?" What things? Evidently, those of which he had been speaking, and these, by a reference to the context, you will perceive were the destruction of the city and the temple. On this point we are agreed. Proceed we then to the second. "And what shall be the sign of thy coming." What coming? Without doubt, his coming to execute these judgments upon that obstinate people. Third: "and of the end of the world?" This, however, is not properly a third question, but merely a member of the second: "the sign of thy coming and of the end of the world?" (*τὸν αἰῶνα*) end of the *age*, or *Mosaic economy*: for the disciples understood that the destruction of the city and temple would close the Jewish dispensation, and usher in that of the Messiah: hence they associate his coming to execute this destruction with the end of the Jewish age or state. St. Mark's account of the same matter clearly corroborates this view. "And as he went out of the temple, one of his disciples saith unto him, Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings *are here*! And Jesus answering, said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, over against the temple, Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, asked him privately, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what *shall be* the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?" (Mark xiii. 1—4.) So also does St. Luke's. "And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly

stones and gifts, he said, *As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.* And they asked him, saying, Master, but when shall these things be? and what sign *will there be* when these things shall come to pass?" (Luke xxi. 5—7.) You perceive that both these latter evangelists make but two questions of it; and must not every reflecting reader be satisfied from the nature of the case, that these inquiries had no sort of reference to the close of time? What could put such an idea into their heads? they had not been taught by Moses, nor by any of their prophets, that this mundane system should come to an end: and all the Jews believed that when the then existing ecclesiastical dynasty should terminate, it should be succeeded by a most resplendent state of things under their Messiah, which (from all that I can learn) was never expected to come to a period. The assumption then that the disciples questioned Christ respecting the end of time, is wholly without rational warrant.

5th.—We will next glance at my friend's objections to my *novel* mode of applying the parables, he thinks my error here is sufficiently clear from the fact, that seven eighths of all christendom are against me. Martin Luther did not yield to this argument—or, possibly, protestantism had been unheard of to this day—nor did John Wesley, or methodism would not have been: all reformers, both in church and state—in law, medicine, the arts; are met at the outset by this argument: my friend was therefore right in not resting his cause here.

He proceeds to convince us that the passage concerning *the rich man and Lazarus* is a literal narrative! bless me! then the dead carry with them to eternity their bodily organs! and, although existing in an immaterial state, they are still subject to material influences! The rich man "lifted up his eyes," he saw Lazarus in "Abraham's bosom," he requested to have him sent to dip his *finger* in *water*, and therewith to cool his *tongue*, for the suppliant was tormented in the *flames*. All fact—literal fact! disembodied spirits have *eyes*, and *tongues*, and *bosoms*, and *fingers*; and the material element of *fire* can burn them, and of *water* can cool them! literal fact all! The regions of the saved, too, and of the damned, are so adjacent to each other that the inhabitants of each can maintain a familiar colloquy with those



of the other! How manifestly allegorical is this whole account! Its scene is laid on the earth; and the *dramatis personæ* (although they are said to have died, and one of them to have been buried,) are represented as being still in the body. My friend thinks the orthodox views of this text are confirmed by what is termed Josephus' dissertation concerning *Hades*: said dissertation, however, is a most palpable forgery, and gotten up, without doubt, as a counterpart to this parable; the phraseology is any thing but Jewish, and it is asking too much of our credulity to require us to believe that Josephus had any hand in it. But even allowing it genuine, what then? Why then, hell is in the interior of our earth, and both the good and bad of all the dead are there—and Lazarus, when carried to Abraham's bosom, was in fact carried to hell! According to this, we may expect ere long, (should Simms' theory be true, which holds the interior of our globe to be accessible at the poles,) that the improvements in navigation will bring us to be well acquainted with hell and its inhabitants.

I shall not waste time in *proving* this passage to be an allegory; for that were as superfluous as to prove that a square is not a circle. Mr. Wesley's logic, by which he would show it to be a narrative of fact, would equally convert full twenty other bible parables into literal histories: for argument's sake, I am willing to concede this point to my opponent; merely that he may be convinced, that his dogma of endless woe cannot be maintained from this passage even with this concession. I know that the main feature of it on which the argument for this doctrine is made to rest, is the account of the gulf—the impassable gulf. Let us then admit *Hades* to be a local hell, either under, or beyond the earth, as you please; and let us admit the gulf to be literally such, i. e., a deep, and rugged chasm. You have now gained a hell, and one from which there is no chance of egress: but for how long? Ay! indeed; this is likely to prove a troublesome question for the theory of an endless infernum! for *hades* itself is doomed to certain destruction. "I will ransom them from the power of *hades*, [so reads the septuagint, the version from which Christ and his apostles were wont to quote,] I will redeem them from death. O death, I will be thy plagues! O *hades*, I will be thy destruction." (Hosea xiii. 14.) When hell is destroyed, and its subjects ransomed from its power, what purpose can the

gulf answer? I will ask another question; what is gained in favor of endless misery from the admission that the parable before us is literal history? Both these questions are fairly answered by the one word—NOTHING.

*The man without a wedding garment* :—who was he? somebody that had stolen into heaven unperceived through the carelessness of the porter? It would seem so, by my opponent's understanding of it! I should say rather a Jewish intruder, (one of the class in regard to whom the king had said, "they shall not taste of my supper,") who sought to shelter himself from the retributions which were about to befall his nation, by assuming the profession of—without the qualifications indispensable to—a subject of Christ's kingdom, or church. One of the same class that Jesus said should say unto him in that day; "Lord, thou hast eaten and drunk in our presence; and we have prophesied in thy name, and in thy name done many wonderful works," &c.: but he shall say unto them, "Depart from me, I never knew you." It must not be lost sight of that all these things are spoken of in referenee to the church or kingdom of Christ on earth—their application to the future state is not only gratuitous, but in its logical consequences supremely ridiculous.

The closing question of my opponent is important. Does the hope of an endless hereafter life rest on no clearer scriptural warrant than is urged in proof of the eternity of punishment? This comprises the sum of his last argument. Oh! most blighting to human hope were the negative to this question! for I do with my whole soul believe, that the eternity of punishment has no scriptural warrant at all: *aion*, and its derivatives, are so equivocal in their signification, that if no better ground of hope were afforded in regard to the duration of the future life, than what they furnish, such hope would be the next thing to despair: happily, however, the case is far otherwise!—for, 1st, the subjects of the future life are to be like unto the angels of God, "neither do they die any more." (Luke xx. 36.) 2nd. They are raised immortal, (incapable of dying) incorruptible, (above the power of decay) and glorious. They are also made alive in Christ, (who is said to have been made "after the power of an endless life;" Heb. vii. 16,) and to "bear the image of the heavenly;" (1 Cor. xv.) their vile body is to be changed, and fashioned like unto Christ's

"most glorious body." (Phil. iii. 21.) 3rd. They enter into a glory in exchange for their present light affliction, which *far exceeds eternal*, (for so is the literal reading) *exceeds it to excess*. (2 Cor. iv. 17.) 4th. Death is to be abolished, in regard to them, "swallowed up in victory;" which seems the strongest form of assurance that their existence can never cease. In addition to these reasons, it must be considered that we were made to the end that we should live eternally, and enjoy our creator. In this, then, is the object of our being fulfilled; whereas by a contrary issue it would be frustrated: and, moreover, life must be absolutely eternal, having its well-spring in the eternal God. On the contrary, suffering is a mere result of the present imperfection of our nature. In short, the reasons are almost endless which justify the belief of a future endless existence to man, and they will all apply, with others in addition, against his being subjected to an eternity of suffering.

We have now gone through my friend's objections, and what is their amount? Their aggregated weight is but that of a feather against the mass of testimony to which they stand opposed. So shielded at all points is my argument upon the application of this important subject, that I might safely dispense with all that I have said in its support, and then decide the issue by one single text. If my opponent is right, there is coming a judgment, the calamities of which will a million-fold exceed all together that the sun has ever looked down upon since it was first struck into existence: whereas, Christ says of the time of Jerusalem's destruction, "*Then shall be a time of trouble such as never was since the beginning of the creation until that time*; NO, NOR EVER SHALL BE!"

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## POPULAR DEBATE.—No. IV.

ARE WE TO INFER, FROM THE OPPOSITION ENDURED BY CHRIST AND HIS APOSTLES, THAT THEY TAUGHT THE DOCTRINE OF ENDLESS MISERY ?

## AFFIRMATIVE.

One thing, at least, is certain, and that is, that the saviour taught doctrines to which wicked men were extremely averse. On this point we cannot but be agreed. Was the doctrine of endless punishment one of these ? It either was, or he taught the opposite ; for *something* relative to the future states of men he unquestionably did teach : but that the subject-matter of his preaching was not universalism is evident, from the virulent persecutions which met him at every step : for men would hardly, methinks, have persecuted him, in return for the good news he brought them, that they were all to go to heaven when they died ! Oh, but this would have suited them exactly ! they would have hailed it with acclamations ; and instead of regarding the saviour as their enemy, they would have greeted him as their benefactor. That Christ was not so received ; but, on the contrary, was opposed, vilified, hated, scoffed at, and finally murdered, is an evidence irresistible that he did not inculcate universal salvation.

There is no doctrine to which the heart of man is more opposed, than that which tells him he must answer in a future life for the actions committed in the present ; especially when it is added, that the hell to which his sins will sink him will retain him forever ; its fires prove as quenchless as his immortal spirit, and escape from the aroused wrath of omnipotence as impossible as to get beyond the circumference of his power. Ah ! this is not a doctrine to please the carnal heart ; it is not adapted to quiet the troubled ocean of man's fears and anxieties about eternity ; it administers no opiate to the guilty conscience : and hence, as the pious minister of Jesus knows full well, the world is arrayed in deadly hostility against it. I am persuaded that nothing but this could have aroused against the saviour the rancour which followed him all his life, and at length nailed him to the cross.

Christ foresaw this consequence from the preaching of his gospel; and he forewarned his disciples against it. "If the world hate you," said he, "ye know that it hated me before it hated you." "In the world ye shall have tribulation," &c. And the apostles, accordingly, were soon called upon to verify the fact that "they that will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution:" but that it is "through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom of God." These facts and general principles can by no means be reconciled with the idea that Christ and his apostles inculcated universal salvation.

Now it is well known that this doctrine does not meet with opposition from the irreligious and the licentious: these yield it their hearty good wishes and open countenance. No; it is the humble follower of Jesus who most abhors this fatal error—the man of prayer—he who has exercised an evangelical repentance, and obtained the pardon of his sins; he views universalism as a dangerous and soul-damning delusion, and he sincerely deprecates its prevalence. Whilst on the other hand the doctrine of an endless hell for the finally impenitent, finds as little favor with sinners now as formerly. From all which I deduce the consequence, that this was the doctrine of Christ and his apostles, and that to this source principally, we must trace the opposition and persecutions which they sustained.

#### NEGATIVE.

The first point to be settled in this inquiry is, whether Christ and his apostles were opposed by that portion of human society termed *the wicked*, or by that called *the pious*: the determining of this question must necessarily affect the conclusion of the argument. It can scarcely be requisite to *prove* to you, my hearers, those of you acquainted with the gospel history at least, that all the persecutions of the saviour came from men who took high ground for sanctity of character; the priests of the Jewish church—the scribes, whose office it was to expound the law of God; and the pharisees, "who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:" these were they from whom came all the opposition to the gospel in the infancy of its promulgation: and from men of like pretensions, and of a like spirit, I may add, have emanated all the religious persecutions

which have occurred since time began. Christ himself has, I think, expressed the very same sentiment in different language: (see Mat. xxiii.) he charges the scribes and pharisees with being guilty of "all the righteous blood that had been shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel, unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom they slew between the temple and the altar." (ib. 35.) By which we undoubtedly are to understand, that all this martyr-blood had been spilt by the dark and fanatical spirit which these classes so eminently displayed.

As to the common people, those usually denominated *the wicked, the world, &c.*, they were ever the friends of the saviour; they attended upon his preaching in throngs—they followed him into the wilderness far from their villages: Christ on several occasions fed thousands of them together, which gives us an idea of the numbers by which he was usually attended; and, we are directly informed that "*the common people heard him gladly:*" (Mark xii. 37.) but for them he would have fallen a victim to the malice of his foes before he did, "but they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned." The following passage gives us a clear intimation as to the state of things in this respect. "Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him. And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." (Luke xv. 1, 2.) This drew out of the saviour the beautiful parables of the lost sheep, lost piece of money, and prodigal son; in which he vindicates his attentions to those whom his pharisaic opposers so self-complacently denominated *sinners*.

Having settled the fact that the opposition to the saviour proceeded mainly from the classes denominated *the pious*, and chiefly from the straitest of them called *the pharisees* with their *priests* at their head; we may now I think account for that opposition on different grounds from those assumed by my opponent. These classes themselves believed in endless misery; they had borrowed this dogma from heathen nations, for assuredly and by consent of even the highest orthodox authorities, they had no warrant for it in their own canonized scriptures: it cannot be rationally supposed, then, that Christ excited their rancor, by teaching endless misery. No, no! that it proceeded from an opposite cause is far more probable: Christ taught that God is an

universal Father, and benefactor to mankind : whereas they supposed him a partial Being, and (as a matter of course) that they were the subjects of his partiality—Christ's teaching went to prove that even *enemies*, despised *publicans*, and *harlots*, are comprised within the range of heavenly beneficence ; whereas they would fain have had it thought that God's goodness was restricted to an inconsiderable moiety of our race. The extremes of north and south are not wider apart than were the sentiments inculcated by the saviour, and those entertained by these narrow and bigoted sectarists. In view of these facts we may easily understand what kind of a *world* it was against which Christ cautioned his disciples—it was the same that had hated him—from which had proceeded all his own bitter and unrelenting persecutions—it was, in short, the (so called) *religious world* : from the same source have issued all the murders, tortures, confiscations, proscriptions, exactions, &c., which, sanctified by godly pretexts, have, in all ages, and in all climes, drenched in blood our groaning earth : the common people have never (save in the capacity of tools) been engaged in this horrid business : all history agrees in tracing it to a fanatical spirit in religion.

Neither is it true, my friends, that the doctrine of universal salvation is generally pleasing to men : it is indeed true that it *ought* to be so ; and it is also true that if men's hearts were less selfish and less sophisticated with corrupting creeds, it *would* be so ; but it is undeniable that the dogma of endless suffering is much better adapted to flatter the vanity and self-love of man than the contrary, and hence, probably, we may account for its more general prevalence in the world. This doctrine tells us there will be an eternal distinction between us and others ; this pleases us, for we are sure to think the distinction will be in our favor ; it tells that God loves some and hates others ; this pleases us also, for we are sure to think ourselves the party loved : it tells us that some are to go to heaven at death and some to hell ; and with this likewise we are suited, for we think there *ought to be* a hell for somebody, and there are always certain somebodies whom we dislike heartily enough to wish there ; but as to ourselves—oh ! no danger in the world to ourselves—hell could not have been made for such promising folk !

Doctrines of cruelty have ever met with a better reception

among men than have those of benevolence; for the reason that the mass of mankind are in gross ignorance, and their conceptions of the deity are low and grovelling: when intelligence and refinement become more general in the world, doctrines of benevolence will be better received. Paul labored and suffered reproach for exhibiting God as an universal saviour: (1 Tim. iv. 10.) and the same teaching would have ensured him a like experience in every subsequent age to the present time. My opponent tells us how opposed to the doctrine of an endless hell the pious minister of Jesus finds the world; but the truth is utterly to the contrary. I put it to your own observation, whether the opposite to this is not the fact! Knew you ever of a case of persecution against an individual, for his preaching an endless hell? Never, surely! As already said, this doctrine is by far too convenient, and too well suited to the vanity and selfishness of men, to be a subject of opposition: it is a point which the interests of all false and corrupt religions will unite to guard, as the main secret, and all-potent engine of their dominion over mankind.

Nor can I allow to my friend's objection to universalism the weight he claims for it, that it is generally disapproved, and its propagation deprecated, by men of prayer. Possibly it is; possibly too the preaching of it by the apostle was opposed by this class of persons: we know with certainty that it was principally such that composed the number of haters and crucifiers of the saviour! I should be sorry to endorse a millionth part of the doctrines and doings of praying men; for many and many a dark deed of crime, God knows, has sought to sanctify itself by prayer. The simple fact, therefore, of a doctrine being loved or hated by praying men proves nothing either as to its truth or falsity.

On the whole, then, I ask, how can we rationally infer from the opposition encountered by Christ and his apostles, that they taught the doctrine of endless misery? On the contrary, when it is considered that his opponents themselves believed this doctrine, is not an opposite inference the more rational? You, my hearers, may decide these questions for yourselves. I pretend not to say that they were persecuted for the one of these causes or the other, but only that if for either, the latter is the more probable.

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## POPULAR DEBATE.—No. V.

IS THE NOTION OF A GENERAL JUDGMENT AFTER DEATH  
AGREEABLE TO THE SCRIPTURES AND REASON ?

## ARGUMENT IN THE AFFIRMATIVE.

Of all the heresies that have infested the Christian church, universalism is at once the most audacious and the most alarming; it lays its destructive axe at the root of opinions which have ever, by general suffrage, been regarded as vital, and fundamental, in christian faith : amongst these it is doubtful if any one is more venerated, for its antiquity, and general prevalence in the world, than that which is involved in the question before us. Will there be a judgment after death ? Say no—decide this momentous inquiry in the negative, and you will be secure of a hearty vote of thanks from the irreligious and the abandoned of all nations, by whom, we may be sure, this doctrine is but little relished. Say no, and the bible may very well be dispensed with : for its main business, as it seems to me, is to prepare men against that dreadful assize at which all our actions in life must undergo the severest scrutiny. Ah ! in reference to this, how many a dying wretch has disclosed the secrets of a life of crime, which had otherwise gone down with him into the oblivion of the grave ! And how many an one at the same awful juncture, has relinquished his grasp upon hoards, which had been accumulated by fraud and oppressive exactions ! Well doth the poet call this the—

“ Great day, for which all other days were made,

\* \* \*

Great day of dread, decision, and despair.

At thought of thee, each sublunary wish

Lets go its eager grasp, and drops the world,

And catches at a single reed of hope

In heaven.”

Reason clearly suggests the necessity for a judgment of men after this life : when we observe the present dispensations of providence, we perceive that they take place indifferently in regard to the righteous and the wicked ; a suitable distinction is not now

maintained between these opposite classes : hence a future dispensation is obviously necessary in order to remedy the irregularities of the present. God must vindicate the justice of his government—he must display his infinite aversion to sin, and his approval of virtue—and this he must do before assembled worlds. By confining our attention to the events of time, we should often be tempted to call the justice of God into question : the cruel, and the rapacious, are allowed to trample under foot and despoil the meek and the upright : the poor man finds in the law but a weak defence against the rich oppressor ; the innocent are often subject to the full rigors of legal vengeance, whilst the guilty are suffered to escape with impunity. Who can estimate the sum of suffering caused by such men as Charles XII. of Sweden, Cromwell, and Napoleon ? How could Pizarro, and Cortes, be adequately punished in life, for the prodigies of cruelty which they perpetrated in Mexico, and Peru ? When Jehovah looked down from his throne in heaven upon the unhappy Montezuma, expiring on heated plates of iron : marked he not for deep damnation the miscreant who had caused this suffering ? A single mandate, from a single tyrant, has often whelmed millions of hearts in anguish ; think of the horrors inflicted within the limits of British-East-India (if Burke, and Sheridan, may be trusted) by the tyranny of Warren Hastings ! “ I’ll swear,” (said an unhappy princess, whose husband had been perfidiously murdered by that tyrant,) “ if Hastings is not damned, his God is a black accomplice in his crimes !” It would indeed seem so, if the unjust oppressions of time are not to be avenged in eternity.

When we look through the scriptures we find them to contain, 1st : numerous allusions to a certain set time, denominated “ the day of judgment ;” these allusions are an indirect proof of the doctrine under examination. 2ndly, we find direct proofs to the same effect in particular descriptions of that day.

“ And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than that city.” (Mat. x. 14, 15.) “ Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they

repented not. Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee." (Mat. xi. 20—24.) "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." (2 Pet. ii. 9.) "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day." (Jude 6.) These are the principal among the indirect proofs of a day of general judgment: you will observe that it is alluded to as a fixed and definite period—not as *a* day; but as *the* day.—Sometimes it is denominated "*that* day," "the great day," &c.

Again, there are passages in which mention is made of "the judgment seat of Christ," and of our having to stand before, and to give an account thereat. (Rom. xiv. 10.—2 Cor. v. 10.)

The accounts of our Lord's second coming I shall not adduce in this argument, although they have been thought to belong to the same subject, but they have been already subjected to the alembic of my opponent's sophistry, and they turned out to mean no such thing. I pass them, then, and go to the direct evidences.

"And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent; Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by *that* man whom he hath ordained; *whereof* he hath given assurance unto all *men*, in that he hath raised him from the dead." (Acts xvii. 30, 31.) Here is the doctrine fully asserted: Christ, the judge—the *world*, the party—and an *appointed day*, the time: all clearly and distinctly revealed.

Next see, 2 Peter iii.: "Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved

unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day *is* with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up. *Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness: Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.*" (6—13.) Here is a circumstantial account of an awful event, or rather train of events. I hope my opponent will not attempt to spiritualise it, and reduce it to a nonentity.

Pass we now to 2 Thes. i: "Seeing *it is* a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; And to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day." (6—10.) Could a general judgment, and one too, which shall decide the fates of the parties for eternity, be more decisively revealed than it here is? Christ descends—he descends from heaven—he descends in flames—he descends to avenge himself upon the enemies of his gospel—and that vengeance, what is it? Destruction, total, perpetual, irremediable.

I will adduce two other testimonies, which I confess to be highly figurative, but which, nevertheless, without doubt, refer to the same stupendous transactions: the first is in Daniel vii. "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did

sit, whose garment *was* white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool : his throne *was like* the fiery flame, *and* his wheels *as* burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him : thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him : the judgment was set, and the books were opened." (9, 10.) The other is in Rev. xx. "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away ; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God : and the books were opened ; and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life : and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it ; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them : and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell was cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." (11—15.) These passages are marked with much sublimity of thought, and grandeur of imagery ; but as they are dark and enigmatical, I do not lean upon them with a strong reliance.

That Paul taught the doctrine of a judgment after death is manifest : we find it distinctly asserted in his letter to the Hebrews. "It is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment." (Heb. ix. 27.) And we are informed in the book of Acts, that "as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled." (Acts xxiv. 25.)

I am curious to know how my opponent will attempt to fritter away all this testimony : not only how he will meet the argument from the scripture, but also from the reason and necessity of things. There must be a judgment after death—all nations have believed in it, and, as already remarked, it is imperatively called for by the inequalities in the present dispensations of providence : evil men look forward to it with fear and trembling ; but the righteous most earnestly desire its coming : it will be to them a day of deliverance, of vindication, and of recompense for all their sufferings and trials in time. They shall also see their desire upon their persecutors, and shall have no longer occasion to exclaim with the souls of the martyrs, as described in Revelation,

“How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth ?” (Rev. vi. 10.)

In conclusion I remark, that if there be no judgment after death, then the saviour’s momentous question, relative to the worth of the soul, is a grave burlesque : nothing more. “What shall it profit a man,” he asks, “if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul, or what shall he give in exchange for his soul ?” And what renders this question more awfully momentous is, that it is propounded in immediate connexion with the declaration, “For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with the holy angels, and then shall he reward every man according to his works.” (Mat. xvi. 27.)

#### ARGUMENT IN THE NEGATIVE.

It may seem an act of great temerity on my part, my auditors, to attempt maintaining the negative of this question against such an array of argument, and evidence, as has been adduced on the other side : more especially as your education, and long habits of thinking, upon this subject, must necessarily bias your minds against the object of that attempt ; nevertheless, a firm conviction that the doctrine of a general judgment after death is a mere bug-bear, without any real countenance from reason or the bible ; and injurious in its influences upon mankind, imposes upon me the duty of undertaking its refutation : give me but your candid attention and I can promise myself success.

1st.—You were told that the wicked do not relish this doctrine. Perhaps not ; but I know of no particular reasons why they should object to it. On the contrary, I should think that they find it sufficiently convenient ; it puts off the day of reckoning to a conveniently *distant* time, and represents its decisions as sufficiently *uncertain* ; and this tends to set their consciences well at ease until the moment of danger is conceived to have nearly arrived ; then comes in the expedient of repentance, just in season to ward the long-suspended stroke of justice ! The anecdote of the Irishman who stole a pig, (whether truth or fiction) well illustrates this point : when told he would have to answer for it at the day of judgment, he replied, “Och ! but had I known you would wait so long, I would have taken two of them !”

It is true, as my opponent remarked, that by the terrors of that

expected day, the dying sinner has often been induced to "make a clean breast," by confession; and that ill-gotten hoards have been wrenched from the hands of avarice and extortion—but what then? Have the robbed and the oppressed been benefited by these fits of remorse? No such thing; they have served for the founding of churches, or of convents, or for the enriching of ecclesiastics, but rarely indeed have they brought reparation to the injured. On the other hand, what a fearful engine of mischief has this doctrine proved in the hands of wily priests! with what terrific phantoms has it peopled the dreaded future! And how dense a darkness has it shed upon man's dying hour! Often, and often, by its means, has the ghostly counsellor at the bed of death, wrung from the fears of the dying man the savings of a life of industry, which ought to have gone to his widow and her orphan children. Indeed, with such frequency has this case transpired, that it has been found necessary by enlightened legislators, to make, by statute, bequests of this nature invalid. Wicked men averse to the doctrine of a judgment after death! Not they indeed; they are prone enough to "put the evil day afar off:" the cheek of the hardy mariner is blanched with dismay, and the prayer of agony quavers on his lips, when his storm tossed vessel seems on the point of being ingulfed in the troubled element beneath him: but the danger passed, he laughs at his fears, and blasphemes the name of God without compunction.

2nd.—If there is to be no judgment after death, my friend thinks, the bible may be dispensed with! its main business being, as he thinks, to prepare men against that event! There is a marvelous issue between us, then, upon this point. I hold the main business of the bible to be the preparing us for this life—its duties, and sufferings—and to reconcile us to its sorrows by revealing the joys that await us in another—it tells of God, and of ourselves—of our relations to him and to each other—and it shows us that a conformity to the obligations which these relations impose, presents the surest prospect of happiness. How many of mankind, I pray, are prepared by the bible against a future day of judgment?

3rd.—He quotes us the poet, who in a strain of extravagance which prose would never countenance, calls the fancied era of the judgment, the—

"Great day, for which all other days were made."

I must think that the Creator was poorly employed if he made all other days for the sake of such a season of ruin, confusion, madness and misery, as we are apt to imagine that day of judgment will prove! It is little short of blasphemy to charge him with so flagrant an outrage upon justice and benevolence. Truth is, that however this doctrine may serve to furnish images of terror and grandeur to the bard, it will illy endure the investigation of sober inquiry.

4th.—The main argument from reason for a future judgment, is, that providence is not *just* in its present dispensations! Such is really the substance of the argument! It is pretended that a suitable distinction is not maintained betwixt the righteous and the wicked. This is a grave charge against the Governor of the universe; and, if true, I should doubt his disposition to administer its affairs at any future time more justly than he does at present. Convince me that my maker can do what is wrong, or omit to do what is right, at one time, and I shall at once despair of his doing otherwise at any time! Now the nature of the case would be materially altered, if it could be made to appear, that from these present irregularities some great and glorious result should ensue—a result consistent with the eventual good of the entire mass of his creatures; but a mal-administration of affairs which shall issue so disastrously to millions of millions, cannot by any sophistry be vindicated; nor can we ever rationally expect the interests of the governed to be safer in the same hands.

But tell me now, ye who can look over the world with an eye of candid observation, are not the distinctions of *condition* betwixt the good and the bad, as broad as are the distinctions of *character*? You must, at least, acknowledge that the latter are not as wide as the difference between unending bliss and unending woe—you must even allow, that if it were attempted to sever these classes from each other, it would be difficult to determine in regard to an immense majority of mankind, whether to rank them amongst the righteous or the wicked, so nearly balanced are their good and evil traits of character! Now, in regard to these, what shall be done? Shall we, whilst we allow them no reward for their good qualities, eternally damn them for their evil ones? This would seem a very unjust measure; and yet it is the very



measure which the common doctrine of a judgment after death contemplates !

We see not, as sees the all-seeing God : he saw Montezuma, for example, suffering under the cruelties of Cortez : perhaps also he had oft seen others suffering under the cruelties of Montezuma, and in that case the sufferings of the latter were but a just measure of retribution. " But Adoni-bezek fled : and they pursued after him, and caught him, and cut off his thumbs and his great toes. And Adoni-bezek said, Threescore and ten kings, having their thumbs and their great toes cut off, gathered *their meat* under my table : as I have done, so God hath requited me. And they brought him to Jerusalem, and there he died." (Judges i. 6, 7.) Yet we are told that men are not judged and punished here ; for if here, why again hereafter ?

And may not Charles XII. Cromwell, and Napoleon, have been mere scourges in the hands of providence ? Many wise and good men have so regarded them, and with the evil they each did, much good was accomplished also. Governor Hastings may have been a tyrant or not : he has been differently, oppositely, represented. Supposing he was, and that God *shall* eternally damn him, agreeably to the Indian princess' requirement ; will his damnation repair the *wrongs* he did in life ? or will its only purpose be *revenge* ? But then, another difficulty occurs ; agreeably to the doctrine under review, the victims of the tyrant are as liable to unending woe as is the tyrant himself ! Still another, after despatching his victims to hell the latter may have himself repented and gone to heaven ! I see not, then, if even there shall be a judgment after death, how it is to repair the evils of life, or make amends for the mal-administrations of providence during time !

5th.—It is commonly supposed that we go at death immediately to heaven or to hell : this being the case, where is the necessity for a general judgement ? Is it to enable the Omniscient Being to review his former decisions ? May he have committed mistakes which this rejudication will enable him to correct ? Or is this first commitment to the prison of the universe upon a *suspicion* of guilt merely, and the business of the judgment to refute or confirm that suspicion ? A more solemn mockery than this same fancied judgment was never conceived. A pageant, suitable enough as a subject of poetry, or of popular declamation,

but how absurd ; yea ridiculous, (sublimely so, however,) when the infinite Jehovah is represented as collecting around him the people of a hundred centuries, that, either he may correct his mistakes, or convince them that he has made none ! Really, for plain and honest prose this is most insufferable stuff !

6th.—But let us to the scriptures and carefully attend to their testimony upon this head. It is not to be doubted that they speak of several days of judgment, and hours of judgment also. It was the day of judgment to the old world when its destruction came upon it. It was Sodom's day of judgment when it was destroyed by fire from heaven. Peter evidently speaks of the time of the latter visitation under this appellation, for he adduces the facts of Lot's deliverance, and the overthrow of the Sodomites, as an evidence, "that the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." (2 Pet. ii. 9.) And the same writer speaks of a day of judgment which was at hand when he sent his epistles to the churches : "for," he saith, "the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God, and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God." (1 Pet. iv. 17.) Even Dr. Clarke admits this as referring to the retributions then impending over the Jewish people.

And now, my hearers, notice well the following passage, which identifies the time of the judgment with that of the introduction of christianity. "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment is come : and worship him who made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." (Rev. xiv. 6, 7.)

My friend's *indirect* proofs of a general judgment require, I think, but a glance, in order to their turning out *no proofs at all*. The first of them is a threat against such *cities* as should refuse to receive the apostles of Christ. "It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah, in the day of judgment than for that city." Is it not too manifest for argument, that nothing more is here meant than that in the time of visitation, it should go harder with that city than it had with Sodom and Gomorrah ? The

latter were destroyed at once; whereas the destruction of the former should be protracted and complicated: it should be besieged, its supplies of food and water cut off; famine and pestilence should stalk within its walls, and an unsparing foe should direct against it the missiles of destruction from without. The next passage contains a denunciation against Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum; which places had been eminently the theatres of his teaching and miracles. They are threatened with a severer fate than had overtaken Tyre and Sidon: the period at which this fate should come upon them is termed "the day of judgment." It must be evident that this judgment was *temporal*, from the fact of its being compared with that which had befallen other cities; but the punishment of the places which had received, without accepting, the offers of the gospel, was to be greater than that of the others, because of their having sinned against greater light: but still we are not to suppose that Christ brought into comparison things between which there could be no proportion, and, therefore, as the lesser judgment was temporal, so also should the greater be.

The only indirect proof yet remaining is Jude, 6. I confess I am not clear as to its meaning, but still I am even with my opponent in this respect, for he can know no more about it than I do. It is usually *assumed* that the angels here mentioned are spiritual beings—that the habitations they left were seats, or mansions, in heaven; and that "the judgment of the great day" means the event contended for in the affirmative of this argument. These airy assumptions have, in human creeds, assumed the form and substantiality of facts! Such occasional obscurities are fortunate God-sends for the popular theology, they serve it as retreating places from the rapidly spreading light of true biblical philosophy.

Before passing on to my opponent's *direct proofs*, I will briefly notice the argument founded on the definite prefix, *the*, (instead of the indefinite, *a*,) as connected with this subject. Unfortunately for this argument, it has no foundation in the original Greek: there the article is *en*, indefinite; not *ho*, definite: "*en hemera kriseos*," a day of judgment: this is almost uniformly the form of the phrase, and this materially alters the face of the argument. And even were the form of the phrase as my oppo-

nent represents it, should we then be justified in assuming, that the scriptures recognise but *one* day of judgment? we might, indeed, if there were not numerous testimonies to the contrary; but to do so in the face of these would seem to imply a strange indifference to bible authority. Every day is, in some sense, a day of judgment, for all God's ways are said to be judgment. (Dan. iv. 37.) He "is known by the judgment he *executeth*." (Psl. viii. 16.) "Every morning doth he bring his judgment to light." (Zeph. iii. 5.) But times of signal retribution upon a particular place or people, are more especially designated as days of judgment, of vengeance, or of recompense: and these are often alluded to in such strong phraseology, that the inattentive reader might easily be led to think that they belonged to the concerns of eternity. See the following, with regard to the destruction of Idumea. "And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling *fig* from the fig-tree. For my sword shall be bathed in heaven; behold, it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment." (Isaiah xxxiv. 4, 5.) "For *it is* the day of the LORD's vengeance, *and* the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion. And the streams thereof shall be turned into burning pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch: It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up forever: from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever." (ib. 8—10.)

Let us now attend to the texts which are considered as direct proofs of a future general judgment: the first is Acts xvii. 30, 31. If I have any knowledge of language this passage affords a *refutation* of the doctrine it is brought forward to support. It informs us that God connived at the idolatry of former times, because of the ignorance of the people; "but now," says the apostle, "he calls on all men every where to repent." Why? "*Because* he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world," &c. Now here a question arises, Are all men, of all ages, to be judged at that appointed day? If so, I again ask, why were not men called on in former times to repent as well

as now ? And, moreover, how can it be said that God *winked* at former wickedness, if it be true that he purposes bringing it to the scrutiny of his bar ? It is most manifest that the apostle spake of a judgment in which the people of former times had no concern ; and, therefore, not a future general judgment, for in that it is supposed, all will be concerned alike ! To me the apostle's meaning is clearly as follows : " In past times, when Jehovah made no express manifestations of himself to the heathen nations, their idolatry was excused, or overlooked, but now, a dispensation of superior glory being opened—its light and privileges being extended to all—all are now called upon to reform their conduct : for God hath appointed in this latter day to judge the world, by the strict and righteous principles of the gospel of his son ; and he hath given assurance of this fact—he has set the seal of his direct sanction to his son's doctrines, by raising him from the dead." Such, upon the face of the passage, seems its true meaning, and the following considerations go irrefutably to confirm it. 1st. As has been shown before, the gospel dispensation is emphatically termed, "*the time of God's judgment.*" 2nd. Christ expressly declares that he will not *personally* judge men, but " the words that I have spoken," saith he, " the same shall judge him in the last day : " (John xii. 48.) i. e., the gospel day, or era. 3rd. We have testimony direct both as to the *time* and the *place* of this judgment, both of which are in accordance with the above view. " Now is the judgment of this world." (John ix. 30.) " He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment *in the earth* : and the isles shall wait for his law." (Isaiah xlii. 4.) " But let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I *am* the LORD which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness *in the earth* : for in these *things* I delight, saith the LORD." (Jer. ix. 24.) " Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice *in the earth.*" (Jer. xxiii. 5.) Thus much for my opponent's first direct proof of a general judgment after death: it is precisely the text that I should select for a contrary purpose.

His next is in 2 Pet. iii. : this seems, *prima facie*, to lend more countenance to his position, and without doubt this seeming is greatly strengthened by our educational bias : but never mind,

with candid scrutiny for our guide we shall get at the writer's meaning I trust. Did the writer mean that the natural elements—fire, air, water &c., should “*melt* with fervent heat”?! What meant he by telling those to whom he wrote that they *looked* for these things? and also, by exhorting them to maintain a strict watch in reference to them? Do not these circumstances seem to imply that they were near at hand? Now that the 13th verse figuratively represents the gospel state, no attentive student of the bible will question. “Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” (2 Pet. ii. 13.) With this compare the following in Isaiah: “For, behold, I create new heavens, and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever *in that* which I create: for, behold I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall no more be heard in her, nor the voice of crying. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days; for the child shall die a hundred years old; but the sinner, *being* a hundred years old, shall be accursed. And they shall build houses, and inhabit *them*; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them.” &c. (Isaiah lxxv. 17—20.) This cannot belong to eternity, for it is presumed people will not there build houses, nor plant vineyards, nor die even in their hundredth year. John, in Revelation, describes the same state of things. “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be* their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.” (Rev. xxi. 1—5.) Observe. This New Jerusalem is not *with*

God *in* heaven, but it cometh down *from* God, *out* of heaven. The destruction of the Jewish state is several times alluded to in the scriptures under the figure of a dissolution of the physical universe. See a prediction to this effect in Haggai. "For thus saith the LORD of hosts, Yet once, it *is* a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the *dry land*. And I will shake all nations, and the Desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts." (Hag. ii. 6, 7.) By universal consent of commentators, this alludes to a dissolution of the Mosaic institution, and the bringing in that of the gospel. Paul evidently so understood it. "Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this *word*, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore, we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear." (Heb. xii. 26—28.) From the whole, then, it must be apparent to all my attentive hearers, that Peter is speaking of no other judgment than that which was to accompany the dissolution of the old covenant, and the ushering in of the new: his language and imagery are exceedingly bold, it is true, and so, indeed, they well might be, for the events themselves were to be stupendous beyond what had ever before been witnessed.

Should it be objected, that, inasmuch as there is an allusion in the connexion to the destruction of the old world by water, and *it took place literally*, therefore we ought also to understand the predicted destruction by fire in a similar sense. I answer, that in point of fact the old world *was not*, itself, destroyed by the deluge: the inhabitants only were destroyed—and not all of them, for Noah and his family were saved, and the writer himself saith "*the same world* is kept in store, reserved unto fire," &c.: that a literal destruction of the "ungodly men," referred to in the text, took place when the old system was abolished, is not denied.

The next proof of a judgment after death, is in 2 Thessalonians, i. Here we have the coming of Christ—with his mighty angels—taking vengeance on the rejectors of the gospel, &c.: were not these matters, in the foregoing debate, clearly proven to

have taken place when the dissolution of the Jewish state, above alluded to, transpired? Was there to be more than one such coming of Christ? If so, as they are all similarly described, how shall we distinguish between them?

A careful analysis of this text, with the context, presents the following as its chief subject-matters, viz.: The apostle writes to comfort the Thessalonian christians under their persecutions—he asserts the righteousness of God in recompensing tribulation upon those that troubled them—he promises them *rest* from these afflictions *when* the Lord Jesus should be revealed, to take vengeance on the persecutors and rejectors of his gospel—this vengeance is termed “everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.” In the next chapter the apostle terms the time of these transactions “that day;” and he cautions them against being deceived by reports that it had already arrived, for it should not occur until “a falling away” had taken place; (alluding, no doubt, to some signal apostacy,) and the “man of sin” had been revealed, whom the Lord should “consume with the brightness of his coming.” This very caution implies that the coming of Christ alluded to was not distant, although less near than some would have had them think; they would not, methinks, have been likely to be deceived with expectations of an immediate coming of Christ to judgment, if they had not been taught that it should happen at no great distance of time.

“But then,” it may be objected, “this epistle was written to a gentile church, and said church was situated in a gentile city; how then could the overthrow of the Jewish state concern them?” Thessalonica, it is true, was a gentile city; but the number of Jews which were there seems to have been considerable, and quite influential also, (see Acts xvii.) and extremely active in their opposition to the gospel. “Now, when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews. And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath-days reasoned with them out of the scriptures; opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ. And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few. But the



Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people. And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain of the brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also." (Acts xvii. 1—6.) I cannot doubt that it is to these the apostle refers in his letter to the christian church in this place, when he says, "it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you:" for such was the rancorous enmity of these Thessalonian Jews to the cause of Christ, (and indeed of the Jews in general,) that they followed the apostles with persecutions even to other and distant places: see what is said of their conduct at Berea. "But when the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Berea, they came thither also, and stirred up the people." (ib. 13.) Similar notices of the opposition of this bigoted people to the apostles appear in several places in the book of Acts: see the following; for example, which relates to Antioch. "And the next sabbath-day came almost all the whole city together to hear the word of God. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming." (Acts xiii. 44, 45.) "And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region. But the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts." (ib. 49, 50.)

"But what," it may again be asked, "are we to understand by a 'destruction from the presence of the Lord?'" &c. Literally, the presence of God is every where: "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou *art* there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou *art there*. If I take the wings of the morning, *and* dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and

the light *are* both alike *to thee*." (Psl. cxxxix. 7—12.) There can be no getting out of God's presence, then, literally : this must necessarily be understood in some qualified sense, and that sense may well be supposed, a banishment from such place or places as Jehovah was supposed specially to manifest himself in. I need not inform my hearers that the land of Judea was thought by the Jews to be such a place ; more especially Jerusalem, and more especially still the temple there: To it, in their banishments, they turned their faces when they prayed.—There shone the shekinah, the representative of the divine presence—there was the holy of holies, where Jehovah was supposed to dwell between the cherubim. Jonah expressly identifies the temple as the place of God's presence : "Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple." (Jonah ii. 4.) So says David, repeatedly, (Psl. xcv. 2: c. 2.) The fact of Jerusalem being regarded in that light is still more plainly evinced in the following passage, which commemorates the forbearance of God toward the Jews, in not exiling them from their country : "And the LORD was gracious unto them, and had compassion on them, and had respect unto them, because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not destroy them, neither cast he them from his presence as yet." (2 Kings xiii. 23.) The following is also to the same effect : "For through the anger of the LORD it came to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, until he had cast them out from his presence, that Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon." (ibid. xxiv. 20.) Now if even the Jews were sojourning in foreign lands, yet, as they were in the habit of going to Jerusalem at the times of their great feasts and religious festivals, they might with equal propriety all be said to have been driven from God's presence, when their beloved city and temple were consumed with flames—their civil and ecclesiastical privileges taken from them, and they, scattered as a conquered and captive people amongst the different nations of the Roman empire.

"But the punishment is termed *everlasting*, and this," it may be said, "signifies duration without end." On this feature of the case I shall not at present devote much time, as I design by and by to consider the scriptural uses of these words at large. One only view of the subject will I here take, which, however, I think

ought of itself be sufficient. If the word everlasting, as used in the scriptures, strictly, and generally, mean endless duration, we then have two communications, resting equally on divine authority, which are in direct, and irreconcilable contradiction to each other. The one of these is an absolute promise that the Israelites should hold the land of Canaan by an *everlasting* possession. (Gen. xlviii. 4.) The other is that they should be exiled from their country, and scattered amongst all the nations of the earth. I need not quote authority for the latter, as it occurs in several places, and long since is so strikingly confirmed by fact. If the everlasting banishment of the Jews from their country were now brought to a close, it would even then have proved of as long duration as did the everlasting possession; but the former may still continue as long in the future, for aught that appears to the contrary, as it already has in the past.

Let us now to the passage in Heb. ix, in which it is thought the doctrine of a judgment after death is directly asserted. Surely no text has been more trifled with, or more wrested from its purpose, than this: in order to make it speak a sense which it was never meant to speak, it is a usual practice of our opponets to mutilate it at both ends; from the beginning are clipped the words, "And as," which agreeably to the laws of grammar, connect it inseparably with what goes before: and at the end is unceremoniously lopped off all that follows the word "judgment;" whereas the adverbial conjunction, "so," by the same laws, indissolubly joins it to what comes after! By thus mincing the passage, our opponents have brought it into tolerable subserviency to the notion of a post mortem judgment. Correctly quoted it reads as follows: "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment; So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many: and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin unto salvation." (Heb. ix. 27, 28.)

Who, that reads the whole connexion, can suppose the writer had any allusion to the death and judgment of men in common? Understood in such light it is as whimsical and vagrant an episode to the subject in hand, as was ever perpetrated by a writer in sober prose! It is a link of sand in a chain of gold!

Truth is, that Paul (or whoever is the author of this epistle) is speaking of a particular class of men, and not of men in general;

this is confirmed by the Greek reading of the text. "And as it is appointed unto *the men* (τοῖς ἀνθρώποις) once to die," &c. Those, namely, with whom he is contrasting Jesus Christ in his priestly capacity—the Jewish high-priests. It is quite impossible for any one who candidly attends to the connexion to deny this. But I may be asked, "In what peculiar sense did these men die? and what are we to understand of the judgment which followed?" Fair questions these, and they shall be fairly answered.

Paul, as I have said, is running a parallel between the Levitical priesthood and that of Jesus Christ; the former did not continue long in one person "by reason of death," but Christ continueth forever, and therefore "hath an unchangeable priesthood;" the saviour "needeth not daily as those high-priests to offer up sacrifices," for this, ("when he offered up himself,") he did *once*, forever: the Levitical priests went "into the holy places made with hands," but Christ "into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:" the former entered "with the blood of others, but Christ with his own blood;" the annual death of the former was but typical, not actual; the one sacrificial death of Christ was real, and personal. When the Jewish high-priest came out from the holy of holies, (having *died*, in the manner stated, "for his own sins, and for the sins of the people,") he pronounced a *judgment* upon the congregation who waited without the tabernacle for his re-appearance; this was a sentence of acquittal of their errors of the past year; it was in the following words: "The LORD bless thee, and keep thee. The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace." (Num. vi. 24—27.) The author of the epistle to the Hebrews has most ingeniously accommodated this circumstance in the usages of Jewish worship to illustrate certain facts under the gospel: as, for example, the Levitical high-priest was seen after his ceremonial death by the congregation, looking for him, to their joy, and justification from the sins of the past year. So Christ, though dead, shall appear in the hearts of all believers unto their salvation—salvation, not from the *condemnation* for sin merely, but from *sin itself*.

So much for this passage, so strongly relied upon by many in proof of post-mortem judgment. I put it to your candor and good

sense, my hearers, if it can be properly considered as being at all to that purpose? That cause must be sadly put to it for authorities which resorts to one so really foreign to its object, as is the text before us to the object of the doctrine of a general judgment after death. It is any thing but probable that a short isolated declaration, about men in general being judged after they died, should have been thrown into the midst of a chain of argumentation, which had for its object the exemplifying the superiority of the christian over the Jewish priesthood! And besides, if we even lose sight of this absurdity, and admit the clause to refer to a general judgment after death, then tell me pray, what analogy can be found betwixt that circumstance, and the sacrificial offering and subsequent appearance of Christ to believers? Can you discover any, whatever? If none, then that circumstance cannot be the one intended by the writer in the text, but some other with which Christ's death and subsequent appearance will compare; and I have already shown what that is.

Well, my opponent has given us two other texts—one in Daniel vii, the other in Revelation xx: he confesses them somewhat obscure and enigmatical, and he therefore leans not on them with much reliance; we will glance at them nevertheless, for if they will not serve to *prove* the position of our friend, they may to *refute* it.

As to the one in Daniel, it wholly relates to what should take place in the days of the fourth kingdom—which, as all good critics unite in saying, is the Roman empire. These kingdoms were first shadowed forth to the mind of Nebuchadnezzar in a dream, under the representation of a large image of a human figure; the head thereof, being of gold, symbolized the Assyrian empire; the breast and arms of silver, symbolized the Medo-Persian (which subverted the Assyrian;) the belly and thighs of brass, represented the Macedonian (which subverted the Medo-Persian;) the legs and feet of iron and clay, shadowed forth the Roman power (which subverted the Macedonian;) the ten toes of the image represented the ten kingdoms of which the Roman power was composed. “And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, *but* it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it

shall stand forever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold ; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter. And the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure." This last represents the kingdom of Christ, which, it is well known, arose in the midst of, and completely superceded the Roman power. Bishop Newton (with whom in the main agrees Sir Isaac Newton) speaketh as follows in his dissertations on the prophecies : " All these kingdoms will be succeeded by the kingdom of the Messiah. ' I beheld,' saith Daniel, ver. 9, 10. ' till the thrones were cast down,' or rather ' till thrones were set, and the ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool : his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him : thousand thousands ministered unto him : and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him : the judgment was set,' or the judges did sit, ' and the books were opened.' These metaphors and figures are borrowed from the solemnities of earthly judicatories, and particularly of the great Sanhedrim of the Jews, where the father of the consistory sat, with his assessors seated on each side of him, in the form of a semicircle, and the people standing before him : and from this description again was borrowed the description of the day of judgment in the New Testament."

Daniel afterward had the same great events presented to his mind in a vision of a different kind : instead of an image of a human figure he saw four beasts ; the 1st like a lion, representing the Babylonian power : the 2nd like a bear, standing for the Medo-Persian : the 3rd like a leopard, by which is symbolized the Macedonian ; and 4thly comes the Roman empire, represented by a beast of great power and ferocity, which has no prototype in nature : it had ten horns, representing the ten integral parts of this great kingdom. The prophet then in a very sublime manner alludes to the institution of the empire of Christ, (in the very midst of the Roman power, and at the time of the zenith of its glory.) " I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit," &c. He then speaks of a little horn springing up in the midst of the ten, which, from the description,

is undoubtedly some grand apostate from, and persecutor of the church; without doubt it is the same as is alluded to by Paul, under the appellation of the "man of sin," whom the Lord should consume with the brightness of his coming. "I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. And the ten horns out of this kingdom *are* ten kings *that* shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. And he shall speak *great* words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand, until a time and times and the dividing of time. But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy *it* unto the end. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom *is* an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." (Dan. vii. 21—27.)

On the passage in Rev. xx. it cannot be necessary to say much, it is evidently parallel with the above in Daniel, whence also its representations are borrowed: it shadows forth the universal reign and judicial authority of Christ Messiah: in those days the regal and judicial functions of government were invariably united; hence in scripture phraseology, *to judge*, always imports the same as *to govern*: when it is said that such and such persons *judged* Israel at particular times, we are to understand that these persons exercised the supreme rule; when it is said also that "the Lord shall *judge* his people," we may understand it precisely as if it read, the Lord shall *govern* his people. In accordance with this usage the moral government of Messiah during the gospel era is set forth under the representation of a judgment, or trial in judicial form. Christ told his disciples they should sit with him on thrones, "judging the twelve tribes of Israel:" in other words, that as his instruments they should assist in the moral govern-

ment of his church or kingdom: "to stand at the judgment-seat of Christ," then, is to be amenable to him as our moral governor etc., etc. It is most marvelous that erudite expositors of the bible, seeing that these matters were not unknown to them, should have suffered themselves to be so warped by prejudice as to charge it with teaching the heathenish dogma, that Jehovah has need to arraign the spirits of dead men at his tribunal, in order that he may form a decision upon their actions while in the body! That the heathen nations should have generally adopted this persuasion is less wonderful, seeing that all their notions of their divinities were gross, and grew out of usages amongst themselves. The Jews deemed better of their God—more philosophically—an all-seeing—all-pervading spirit—all just, and pure, and good—whose tribunal is in the bosom of every thinking Being: what needs he of an external bar?—Of books, and witnesses, and other of the forms and ceremonials of trial? The Jewish scriptures sanction no such puerile representations of the infinite Jehovah. Shame to christians, that they have copied the crude conceptions of heathenism!

The book of Revelation abounds with *prosopopœia*, or *personification*. Sin, death, hell, the devil, antichrist, heresies of different kinds, are all personified: and to such length is the figure carried that they are even in some cases represented as suffering; hence we find mention of a lake of fire and brimstone, "where the beast and the false prophet are:" (these represent a spirit of apostasy and a spirit of persecution.) And hence also we find mention of the casting of death and hell into the lake of fire; also the *cases* of those who had suffered martyrdom in the cause of Christ, are represented under the figure of the *souls* of these persons, which are set forth as crying out for vengeance upon their persecutors. This latter circumstance was seized upon by my opponent, who, understanding it in the literal sense, supposes that saints in heaven are actually impatient for the day of judgment, that they may be avenged in the endless damnation of their oppressors! Merciful God, what saints are these! if such is the character of the inhabitants of heaven, demons of darkness were preferable society to them. This portion of Scripture, as has been before shown, revealed things which were shortly to come to pass—the trials and sufferings of the infant Christian



church—the judgments which should be executed upon its oppressors and corruptors—particularly those impending over the Jewish church and nation, are the prominent subjects of the book. These judgments are sometimes expressed under the phrase “second death;” a death which some have persisted in representing as interminable, in the face of the declarations that death is to be destroyed—be no more—be swallowed up in victory—and that in its extinction the *last enemy* shall be extinguished! Undoubtedly the several passages in this book which speak of these events, are to be understood as implying that under the benign government of Messiah, all evils, both physical and moral, shall come to an ultimate end; no more tears—no more night—no more death—no more sin—no more sickness, nor sorrow, “for the former things shall be done away”—no farther need of sun, nor moon, for the quenchless and unsetting glory of Jehovah shall be the future light of all intelligences forever. “And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels roundabout the throne, and the beasts, and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.” (Rev. v. 11—13.)

What now remains in proof of a judgment after death? I truly know of nothing, either on scriptural or philosophical ground; my opponent, it is true, supposes that Christ’s question relative to the advantage to be derived from gaining all the world, and losing one’s *soul*, has a bearing in favor of that doctrine, “especially,” quoth he, “as this question was propounded in immediate connexion with the account of his coming to reward men according to their works.” It was so, I grant; but then what is said in the same instance as to the *time* of said coming? It was to take place in the life-time of some that heard him speak; and consequently, instead of favoring my friend’s position, it makes against it—for if God rewards men according to their works in this world, he certainly does not defer that business until the end of time.

A judgment eighteen hundred years ago, is rather too far back, I fancy, for the purpose of my opponent. Moreover, the word *soul*, in the passage under consideration, should have been *life*—even the orthodox Dr. Clarke admits this, and expresses his astonishment at the translator's having rendered it as it now stands. To the mere English scholar it is manifest, from the grammatical connexion of the passage, that it was the *life* of which Christ was speaking, not the *soul*; and it is indeed quite surprising that the same Greek term should have been twice rendered *life* in one verse, and twice *soul* in the verse next following, and yet an unbroken connexion (both in language and subject) uniting the two verses! “Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his *psuche* shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his *psuche* for my sake, shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own *psuche*? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his *psuche*?” (Matt. xvi. 24—26.) When the rules of interpretation are thus grossly violated, one cannot help suspecting that truth has been purposely sacrificed to the interests of a creed. To perversions of this kind the popular dogmas in theology are mostly indebted for the scriptural countenance they claim. The dangers of losing the soul! How many a thrilling and terrifying peal has been rung upon this theme! And men in their ignorance have not doubted that their aroused alarm on this head had good bible warrant.\*

I cannot be persuaded, my hearers, that the doctrine of a judgment after death has been productive of any benefit to mankind; whatever tends to encourage the impression that the retributions of guilt are distant—and uncertain as distant—must necessarily be pernicious in its influences; and without doubt, the common notion of a general judgment has this tendency. We have inspired testimony to this effect. “Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men

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\* “What shall sing the dirge of a soul that is lost?” exclaimed the late eloquent and amiable Summerfield. “What celebrate the obsequies of an entombed spirit? If the sun should hide his face behind a darkening gust—if the stars should fall from heaven—if the heavens were veiled in sack-cloth—if earth were convulsed throughout her whole circumference, and from mountain-top to mountain-top burst forth the yell of horror and desolation; all would not be adequate to express the event of a lost and damned soul!” Very eloquent this, it is true; but eloquence often lends its gorgeous coloring to paint the face of error.

is fully set in them to do evil." (Eccles. viii. 11.) Still the writer of this text did not suppose that punishment was deferred until after death; on the contrary, he positively asserts that the days of the wicked shall not be prolonged; but the mere circumstance of a delay in the execution of punishment he saw to be of injurious consequence on the hearts of men. How much more so, to tell them that they may possibly escape with entire impunity, how guilty soever they might be? And what must men think of the wisdom and goodness of Jehovah, as our moral governor, if he does indeed deal with us upon principles which himself has declared pernicious? It is nowise probable that in the above passage there is allusion to a tardiness in the retributions of heaven; I think that the reference is to human punishments, which are often delayed, (and even omitted altogether,) and men are apt to be emboldened to repeat their transgressions by this delay and uncertainty. In Solomon's time, nothing was known of a judgment after death; it was a settled point with the people of that day, that sooner or later the judgments of heaven overtook the guilty in life; although then, as now, they were apt to be deceived into false conclusions, from the external appearances of prosperity on the part of wicked men, and from the fact that "there be just men unto whom it happeneth, according to the work of the wicked;" as if the operations of nature, and the contingent events of life must each moment be interfered with, and shaped to suit the ever-changing moral conditions of mankind! Christ himself has told us, that "God causeth his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth his rain upon the just and the unjust." But these circumstances do not conflict with the express testimony of the scriptures on the other hand. "Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth; much more the wicked and the sinner." (Prov. xi. 31.)

The sum of my argument, then, is as follows: 1st. That there is no express nor fairly implied scripture warrant for a general judgment after death. 2d. That on the contrary, all the texts which speak of a judgment, or of judgments in particular, are clearly, (so far as they can be understood,) applicable to *time*, not to *eternity*. 3d. Both God the Father, and Christ the Messiah, are expressly and repeatedly represented as exercising the judicial branch of their moral government *in the earth*. 4th. The

bible (as well as civil history) abounds with *instances* of divine judgment upon the guilty, both individuals and communities. 5th. Hence I infer that, except the righteous Judge of all the earth tries and punishes the same parties *twice* for the one cause, that a judgment after death is *unnecessary*. 6th. It were a *mockery* also, for the cases to be tried are clearly known to the infinite and omniscient arbiter, in their origin, and consequences, direct and remote; in his mind, therefore, they are *prejudged*. How vain, then, and absurd, were the forms of trial under such circumstances! Finally, if a general judgment, in any form, shall take place after this life, it does not follow that *punishment* (much less *endless punishment*) must necessarily be any part of its consequences. It were far more probable—far more in agreement with what is disclosed to us in nature and revelation of the boundlessness of the divine mercy—that the object of such judgment will be to bring the purity and grace of God into greater contrast to our perceptions, with our wickedness and ingratitude; and thus, whilst at the same time that we shall obtain the deeper conviction of our unworthiness, we shall also be the more constrained to adore that almighty love which shall consent to “cast our sins into the depths of the sea.” (Mic. vii. 19.) We are not without ample bible warrant for this idea of a general judgment and its objects. See amongst other instances to this point the following: “And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. For if by one man’s offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ: Therefore, as by the offence of one *judgment* came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one *the free gift* came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Moreover, the law entered, that the offence might abound: but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound; that as sin had reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord. (Rom. v. 16—21.)

I have before observed, that the verb *to judge*, is most usually employed in the scriptures to express the same thing as the verb

*to govern.* Christ is considered as the King of the New Testament state, or gospel kingdom; and as such he is represented as exercising the judicial functions of government. His judgment shall last while his reign lasts, and he shall only “reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet;” “then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that hath put all things under him, that God may be all in all.” Now it is most strange, on the part of our opponents, that they make the exercise of his judicial authority to begin just where the scriptures make his regal authority to end! And notwithstanding the plain and repeated declarations of the bible, that he “shall execute judgment and justice *in the earth*,” they will have it that he judges men for their good and evil actions, not in time, but in eternity.

## MISCELLANEOUS OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED.

### OBJECTION I

There are two texts of scripture which speak expressly of punishment after death—yea, more, after the resurrection! How will universalism stand before these? The one is Daniel xii. 2. “And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.” The other is St. John v. 28, 29. “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.” These passages are parallel in their reference and signification. Universalists, I know, attempt to give them a figurative application. But we ought ever to reject figurative expositions of scripture, except expressly warranted by the context, or except a passage be such in its nature as to expressly require a departure from the rules of literal interpretation.

### ANSWER.

It is granted that the above texts are parallel, but this very admission is fatal to the objection; for Christ has fixed the *time* of

the event to which they refer, at the period of the overthrow of the Jewish state, and so indeed has the prophet likewise; the entire 12th chapter of Daniel is occupied with predictions relative to this subject. I allege this upon the highest possible authority, viz. that of Jesus Christ. See for proof, Matt. xxiv. 15—21. The resurrection spoken of by Daniel was to take place when there should be “a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time,” when God should “have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people”—when “the daily sacrifice should be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up.” But when were these events to happen? They were to happen when the Jewish dispensation was to be brought to a close, and the gospel institution to be set up on its ruins. The Savior’s exposition of the prophet, in Matt. xxiv. leaves us no ground for doubt on this head. Thus much as regards the *time* of this resurrection, which, instead of being at the end of the world, as our opponents think, is past, by nearly eighteen centuries.

Now as to its *nature*, it were the height of absurdity to suppose it literal, for several reasons. 1st. We have no account in history, sacred or civil, of a literal rising of all men from their graves, at the time of Jerusalem’s overthrow, or at any other period. 2d. To understand it literally would involve consequences absurd and contradictory. It would lead to the result that all mankind will at the same time rise to life and to damnation! “They that have done good to the resurrection of life.” Is there a single human being who *has not* done good? “And they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation.” Is there a human being who *has not* done evil? Take this passage in a strict sense, then, and you have the monstrous conclusion that *all* shall arise to *life*—and *all* shall arise to *damnation*! 3d. A literal rendering of these texts would establish a doctrine at variance with that exhibited by Paul in a set treatise on the resurrection. If men are to arise from their graves in a morally corrupt and dishonored condition, what meant he by saying of our body, “it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption—it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory—it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power?” Say you that he spake this of a part of mankind only? No such thing, sir; on the contrary, he says, “IN CHRIST shall ALL be made

alive." (I Cor. xv.) If Paul believed that mankind would consist, in the resurrection, of two classes, moral opposites to each other, here is the place where he would have said so; but he establishes the contrary, for it is utterly impossible to reconcile the popular doctrine concerning the resurrection with the glorious portraiture of that great event which the apostle has here given—the last enemy vanquished—hades overthrown—all things subdued unto the Father—and God all in all.

But another reason, and sufficient of itself for understanding the texts under consideration in a spiritual sense, is, that the immediate connexion of the one in St. John imperiously calls for such an acceptation. Christ, in a verse or two preceding, describes the resurrection referred to as then beginning to take place. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." And through the chapter he speaks of life and condemnation, as a then present consequence of embracing, and of rejecting the gospel. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." See also the following verse to the same effect: "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." It is any thing but reasonable to suppose that he should so rapidly pass from the figurative to the literal on the same subject, without apprising his hearers of his change of style. I may remark further, that language quite as strong as either of our texts can be produced, the figurative meaning of which, nevertheless, is too obvious to be denied; see the following: "Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost; we are cut off for our parts. Therefore, prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, O my people; I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Isreal. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, and shall put my Spirit in you, and ye shall live; and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord." (Ezekiel

xxxvii. 11—14.) In this place, the civil and moral degradation of the Jews are set forth under the figure of their death, and the perishing of the flesh from off their bones. Their moral and civil restoration are exhibited under the figure of opening their graves and raising them to life. On the whole, then, it must, I think, be manifest to the enlightened reader, that the import of the passages before us is, that Christ, by the word of his gospel, and the ministry of his apostles, was about to call men forth from the graves of superstition and ignorance, in which they had long been buried—that as they came forth to the light of the truth, they should experience justification, or condemnation, according as their past actions had or had not been in accordance with its dictates, or according as their disposition was to receive or reject this gospel. This important work had already begun in Christ's day, but it was destined soon to take effect upon a much wider scale, and, eventually, it shall be universal in its extent. This gospel would affect the vicious subject of its awakening power, in like manner as Paul had been affected by the law. It brought home his sins to his conscience, and thereby slew him, or overthrew his fancied security. (Rom. vii.) But the gospel condemns the sin that it may save the sinner.

Observe, now, what phraseology the apostles were accustomed to employ: "Awake, thou that sleepest, and *arise from the dust*, and Christ shall give thee light." (Ephes. v. 14.) "You hath he *quicken*ed, who *were dead* in trespasses and sin." (Ephes. ii. 1.) "If ye then be *risen* with Christ, seek those things which are above." (Col. iii. 1.) Indeed, the world was considered as dead, and buried in sin and superstitious ignorance. Hence, the necessity of being regenerated, or made alive again, in order to admission into the kingdom, or church of Christ. The word was considered as having a regenerating, a revitalising influence; hence, Paul tells the Corinthians, "For in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel." (I Cor. iv. 15.) It were needless, I think, to attempt making the subject plainer; it were quite sufficient to insist, that Christ could not have meant to teach the doctrine of a final doom upon the spirits of men after the resurrection, for the reason that a calamity so terrible would infinitely exceed in magnitude all the calamities together which have transpired since time began; whereas, as I have elsewhere shown, the



Savior has himself declared, that as great a tribulation as that attending Jerusalem's destruction had never before transpired since the beginning of the creation, "NO, NOR EVER SHALL BE."

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## OBJECTION II.

"Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins : whither I go, ye cannot come." (St. John viii. 21.) It is to be considered in this objection, 1st. That the party addressed should *seek* Christ, but nevertheless *die in their sins*; which implies that they should not *find* the Savior. 2nd. They were to fail of ever getting to heaven, for thither Christ went, and "whither I go," said he, "ye cannot come." Each of these considerations, separately considered, seems sufficient to exclude them from hope; but together they present a barrier to their salvation which appears insuperable.

## ANSWER.

It is admitted that thousands, yea, millions, fail of finding the Savior in this life; but this is conceived to be no reason why they should to all eternity fail of salvation. The scriptures acquaint us with but one way of access to the Father, and that is *by Jesus Christ*. The Savior positively declares there is no other. We have every reason for believing that ninety-nine hundredths of mankind, including infants and the heathen, die without a saving acquaintance with Christ; if on this ground, therefore, we exclude *any* from hope forever, *all* must be so excluded for the same reason; consequently, this part of the objection, if it prove any thing, proves too much. It does so for another reason. I have shown, in a previous part of this work, that every intelligent being is ultimately to be made acquainted with Christ, and to acknowledge him also, "to the glory of God the Father;" (Phil. ii. 9—11.) which sufficiently proves that the opportunity for becoming acquainted with the gospel is not limited to the term of this life; and also, that if it were so limited, a very, *very* small moiety of our race would be saved; and the realms of hell would be peopled by ninety-nine hundredths of mankind! The main strength of the objection, therefore, must depend on the clause, "*whither I go ye cannot come.*" But before this can be admitted

as an argument in proof of the endless ruin of those to whom it was addressed, a question or two must be settled. 1st. Did the Savior refer to the realms of bliss when he said, *whither I go*? He may simply have alluded to his *death*, which would put him beyond the reach of their power. 2nd. Granting that he alluded to the realms of bliss, does it follow that because they could not *then* follow him, they *never* should do so? But what is most fatal to the objection is, that Christ *addressed the very same language to his own apostles!* Are they, therefore, to fail forever of getting to heaven. "Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you." (St. John xiii. 33.) You perceive that he not merely addressed to his disciples the same language as is urged in the objection, but in the same sense; "and *as I said unto the Jews*, whither I go ye cannot come, *so now I say to you.*" Except, then, this language be considered as warranting the belief, that our Lord's own apostles shall be endlessly damned, the objection before us has no weight.

Great use has been made of it, nevertheless; and in order to increase its terrifying power, it is very generally altered from its true reading; the version of it in most common use is as follows: "If ye die in your sins, where God and Christ is ye never can come." I doubt not that in tracts and religious almanacs it is often to be found in this very form, but these with me have not authority quite equivalent to the bible.

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#### OBJECTION III.

"Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." (Matt. xii. 31, 32.) Mark's version of this matter is still more decisive against the Universalist faith; it is even pretended that Matthew's rather favors it than otherwise; "for (say the advocates of a future limited punishment) the very declaration that this particular offence shall not be forgiven in the world to come, seems

naturally to imply that all other sins may; and as for this, although not pardoned in the present nor in the next world, (or *age*, which is the more proper reading) it yet may be in a world or age still subsequent, for the scriptures speak of a plurality of *æons* (worlds or ages) to come." Now the text as it stands in Mark cannot be evaded in this way—it there reads that the blasphemer against the Holy Spirit "hath *never* forgiveness." Nor is this all; for if it were, it might still be pretended that nothing was meant more than that the blasphemer shall be certainly punished to the full amount, and after that he might be exempt as a matter of right, not of pardon; in like manner as a criminal may come out of prison on the expiration of his term, and the law can have no further demands against him for that offence. But the text in Mark bars this evasion also; it declares that the blasphemer against the Holy Spirit "is in danger of *eternal* damnation." How now will this objection be met?

## ANSWER.

Not very easily, reader, I grant, for you have presented it in the most formidable shape possible; it *can* be met, nevertheless, and satisfactorily too, I trust. 1st. Drs. Campbell, Clarke, McKnight, and Lightfoot, though believers in endless misery, have decided that the phrase, "neither in this world, neither in the world to come," is not to be understood as referring to the present and the future states of man; but to the then present dispensation, (the Mosaic) and that which was about to succeed it. (the Christian.) The Methodist commentator is decidedly of opinion that the punishment for this offence was to be of a temporal character; and that in the declaration that it should not be forgiven, Christ intended nothing more than to rank it with the highest class of offences under the law, which were punished with death, and for which nothing but death would atone. But there is no evidence in either case, he thinks, that the punishment was to extend to the soul of the offender in another life. None, indeed, (as he remarks) could commit this particular sin, save those who, witnessing with their senses the performance of his miracles, imputed them to demoniacal influence. 2nd. As to the phrase "eternal damnation," it must be confessed a very strong—a *too* strong rendering of the Greek text; it may bear it, indeed, but it

is not in keeping with the context. It is well known that the word *damnation* comes from a term which is susceptible of various interpretations, and which actually is in other places rendered sometimes *judgment*, sometimes *condemnation*; these, it is true, are strictly as strong in meaning as is the term *damnation*, but they are not so considered in ordinary usage; to the word *damnation* a terrible significance has been attached, which neither its etymology nor scripture authority will justify. The term *eternal*, too, comes from a Greek word of very equivocal signification; it sometimes means a limited, sometimes unlimited duration; sometimes a definite period, as the duration of human life; sometimes an indefinite period, as during the continuance of an existing state or order of things; in this last sense it is employed in the passage before us—"neither in this *æion*, neither in the *æion* to come;" that is, neither in the Mosaic age, neither in the age of the Messiah. It cannot here mean eternity, for it were nonsense to talk of a plurality of eternities; hence, I have said that the rendering of the original here by the phrase *eternal damnation*, is too strong, and not in keeping with the context; it might with more propriety have been rendered, *the condemnation of the age*, a phrase sufficiently awful in its meaning, when we come to know the dreadful and complicated calamities which impended over the heads of that wicked generation, and in these, those blaspheming Jews, who imputed to demoniacal agency the works which Christ performed by the Spirit of God, were doomed to experience their full share.

Thus is this objection disposed of, without the least violence, as I think, to either of the texts containing it. Many weak persons (as Dr. Clarke observes) are apt to be thrown into terror, oftentimes despair, by the persuasion that they have committed this unpardonable sin; and that, therefore, the irrevocable sentence of eternal damnation has gone forth against them. How much superfluous misery has been entailed upon mankind by false views of God, and by false interpretations of scripture! And is it not unaccountable, reader, that we should rest so contentedly in views so contradictory, that whilst we admit the divine mercy to be infinite, we nevertheless suppose there are cases of sin entirely beyond its reach!!!

## OBJECTION IV.

"The Son of man goeth as it is written of him : but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed ! it had been good for that man if he had not been born." (Matt. xxvi. 24.) This is said respecting Judas, and it amounts to a strong argument against Universalism, because, whatever might be the poignancy of Judas' sufferings for this offence, or whatever its duration, even though it extended to a thousand millions of ages, yet if it eventually come to an end, and be succeeded by an eternity of bliss, he will still be the gainer by his existence ; and the declaration, that it were good for him to have not been born, will not in that case hold true. The probability against the ultimate salvation of Judas, is confirmed by the fact that Christ calls him "a devil," (John vi. 70.) also by the fact that he came to his end by self-destruction. "And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself." (Matt. xxvii. 5.) Moreover, the rest of the apostles, in solemn supplication, intimated his final fate in very significant language. "That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place." (Acts i. 25.) And in addition to all this, Christ declares him to be *lost*, and he calls him "the son of perdition." "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name : those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition ; that the scripture might be fulfilled." (John xvii. 12.) All these circumstances together, it must be admitted, make out a very strong probability against the ultimate salvation of Judas.

## ANSWER.

They seem to do so, indeed, my friendly objector, as you have marshalled them. I think, nevertheless, that he may be extricated from that disagreeable predicament without any unfair means. 1st. Be it known, that the declaration about it being good for him not to have been born, was but a common proverbial expression amongst the Jews upon all calamitous occasions. "And Job spake and said, Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said, There is a man child conceived." (Job iii. 2, 3.) "Cursed be the day wherein I was born : let not the day wherein my mother bare me be blessed." (Jer. xx. 14.) "If a man beget

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a hundred children, and live many years, so that the days of his years be many, and his soul be not filled with good, and also that he have no burial; I say, that an untimely birth is better than he." (Eccles. vi. 3.) Dr. Clarke produces several instances from Schoetgen to the same effect. I will give a few of these only. "Whoever considers these four things, *it would have been better for him had he never come into the world*; that which is above, that which is below, that which is before, that which is behind; and whosoever does not attend to the honor of his creator, *it were better for him had he never been born*." CHAGIGAH. "Whosoever knows the law, and does not do it, *it had been better for him had he never come into the world*." SHEMATH RABBA. "If any man be parsimonious toward the poor, *it had been better for him had he never come into the world*." "If any performs the law for the sake of the law, *it were good for that man had he never been created*." SAHAR GENES. The words in small capitals are the titles of several Jewish writings. "These examples sufficiently prove (I am quoting Dr. Clarke) that this was a common proverb, and was used with a great variety and latitude of meaning." Christ, however, does not say it were good for Judas NEVER to have been born, but simply, *if he had not been born*; that is, we may reasonably suppose, if he had not been born that particular person, or at that particular time, or to that particular end of betraying his master. If it were better for him NEVER to have been born, the goodness of his creator is seriously impeached in having conferred an existence which he foresaw would prove an infinite curse to its possessor! That God, who "is good unto all," was also good unto Judas, those tender mercies which "are over all his works," must also have been over him; but this could by no means have been the case if he was brought into being with the foresight that he should eternally be the loser thereby.

But Christ calls Judas *a devil*, and this, you think, strengthens the probability against his salvation. Your brain is probably mystified in regard to this particular, by the supposition that by the word *devil*, is meant an abandoned, fallen spirit of the infernal pit; but, as I have elsewhere shown, this is an unauthorized definition of the term. You believe in Peter's salvation, and him the Savior calls *Satan*. (Matt. xvi. 23.) I see not why one devil may not be saved as well as another.

Again, Judas is called the *son of perdition*, and is said to be *lost*. True, his treachery proved the cause of his temporal destruction, or perdition, (for the terms are synonymous) and the circumstances of his death appear to have been very ignominious and painful; this fact would, according to the usages of speech in those days, fully justify the Savior's calling him the *son of perdition*. As to his being lost, there is no proof that any thing more is meant, than that he was lost to Christ *as an apostle*; the context clearly favors this inference; the Savior had kept together all whom the Father had given him for disciples, save that one. In this particular sense Judas was lost; to consider him as lost in a moral sense, however, would but be to include him amongst those whom Christ came to seek and to save. And it must be further remembered that nothing is to be *so lost*, as not to be recovered again "at the last day." (John vi. 39.)

"That he might go to his own place," and that place, oh, sapient reader, you are pleased to think, was the infernal regions! Extremely modest it was, I must needs say, for the eleven apostles to tell the almighty Jehovah, that the deep abodes of hell was the appropriate place for one of his intelligent offspring, and a former companion of theirs! If they had been certified that God had created that place for Judas, and him for it, they might have called it his "own place" with some propriety; but in the absence of such assurance, it were a stretch of presumption amounting to blasphemy. It must be evident to the candid reader, that the passage in our version needs a transposition, which will transfer the applicability of the words in question from Judas to Mathias, who succeeded him in the apostleship, "that he might go to his own place, from which Judas by transgression fell."

It may well be doubted if Judas died by his own act; the original represents him as having *strangled* himself. There are other modes of strangling besides *hanging*; and a man may strangle himself otherwise than by a voluntary act; Judas may have suffocated with excessive grief, for his grief was excessive. The account of his hanging does not consist with that which Peter gives of his death—"and falling headlong he bust asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out." (Acts i. 18.) The law of gravitation behooves to be subverted, before a person suspended by the neck can fall headlong! Dr. Lightfoot, however, jumps

over the philosophical difficulty in the case, by supposing that the devil may have snatched Judas from the gallows and dashed him to the ground. Ah, it is easy accounting for the greatest marvels where the devil is concerned. On the whole, there is really nothing in the case of Judas which, on close examination, amounts to an argument against universal salvation; nor is there any thing which is not susceptible of an easy explication in agreement with the fact of his eventual redemption.

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#### OBJECTION V.

“Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” (John iii. 3.) “Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind; nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.” (1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.) It would really seem, in this last passage, that the great apostle had the universalist heresy in his eye, and that he penned this language with the express intention of guarding the church to whom he wrote against it. “Be not deceived;” let none persuade you that the good and the bad, with faith and without it, the man of prayer and the blasphemer, are all to attain at last to celestial blessedness; no, no, I tell you that the righteous only shall inherit the kingdom of God.

#### ANSWER.

I have had several previous occasions to observe, in this work, that the phrases, “kingdom of God,” and “kingdom of heaven,” are not to be confounded with the world of celestial bliss; they are never so used in the scriptures. I have given some proofs of this; take a few more. “And when he was demanded of the Pharisees when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them, and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation. Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.” (Luke xvii. 20, 21.) “For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.” (Rom. xiv. 17.) “But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of



heaven against men : for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in." (Matt. xxiii. 13.) 'These are but a specimen of very many proofs, that by the kingdom of God, and of heaven, is meant, the gospel institution in the world ; when it was about to be ushered in, men were told that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, &c. Now, it has long been the prevalent error with christians, in regard to this subject, that they have confounded this kingdom with that of celestial glory beyond the grave. Nicodemus was a Jew ; his habits, and modes of thinking, his prejudices, were all Jewish ; he was told that in order to become a subject of the gospel institution, he " must be born again," must undergo a moral renovation, must cease to act, and think, and worship as a Jew, and begin anew to graduate in the science of religion at the feet of Christ. An individual who has had his birth and education, and spent a considerable part of his life in a despotic country, must needs be born again ere he can appreciate the blessings of a free government. A person in a savage state is not prepared to be ushered at once into civilized life ; he must first be prepared for the transition by an education of his mind, sentiments, and habits. So it is in regard to religion ; ere we can appreciate the blessings of the gospel kingdom, we must obtain a mastery over our evil passions and appetites ; we must cultivate and cherish those dispositions and tempers which will assimilate us to Jesus Christ ; we must cease to do evil and learn to do well. Paul saith truly, that no murderer, fornicator, or the like, can inherit the kingdom of God ; this truth was new to such as had been converted to the belief in Christ, from the various heathen superstitions ; they had been accustomed to regard many vices as not only consistent with religion, but as actual virtues. I need not inform my intelligent readers that the very worship of most of the pagan deities was often associated with acts of a most vicious and repulsive nature. In reading the apostolic epistles, we find they had much trouble to indoctrinate the early converts into the knowledge of that pure and elevated system of faith and morals, which constituted the religion of Christ, the kingdom of God, or of heaven, into which nothing that is unclean, or unholy, can enter ; which is as chaste " as a bride adorned for her husband." We may easily comprehend, then, (without supposing a caution against universalism to be intended,) why Paul warned

the Corinthians against the delusive supposition, that the unrighteous could inherit the kingdom of God; as though he had said, "Be not deceived on this head, my brethren; christianity is quite a different institution from those of which you were formerly the subjects; *they* allowed in you many things which are wicked and abominable, but *it* requires in its subjects the utmost attainable purity of thought, of conversation, of life; and it utterly refuses to lend its countenance to any thing of a contrary nature."

But here arises a question. "Since such are the requirements of Christ's kingdom on earth, can we reasonably expect that the unrighteous will be admitted into that more glorious kingdom in heaven?" No. Neither can we reasonably expect that the utmost holiness to which we can attain while we inherit flesh and blood, will qualify us for admission there; if divine grace must needs effect a preparation in the worst of sinners for that blest abode, so must it also in the best; let the christian who has the immodesty to question this, learn to know himself better. Is he never sensible to the presence of anger in his bosom? of envy, jealousy, discontent, revenge, malice? Does he think to carry these dispositions to heaven with him? How much difference in these respects, on a candid comparison of himself with others, (*some* there undeniably is, but *how much*?) does he find in his own favor? It is quite a plain case that the christian needs a preparation for heaven as well as the sinner; the difference is, that in the former it is begun on earth, in the latter it is not; but to infinite grace the counteraction of the *greatest* guilt is equally possible as that of the *least*.

To speak of salvation to an individual in a state of guilt, is to speak nonsense; it is an absurdity in terms, for what is salvation but a deliverance from guilt; saved from it, we are saved from misery, (*moral* misery I mean,) for where guilt is, and there only, is misery—in the heaven of heavens as in the heart of hell. Let none charge us, then, with the teaching that all mankind are to be made happy in heaven without a previous preparation for it. We differ from others in believing that *all will* eventually be so prepared; some of those to whom Paul wrote, had been such characters as he specifies as not admissible to the church or kingdom of Christ; but they had ceased from their former evil practices, and had become the denizens of that kingdom. (1 Cor. vi. 11.)

A METAPHYSICAL ARGUMENT FOR ENDLESS MISERY  
CONSIDERED.

Sometime since I attended divine service at the Second Presbyterian church, Cincinnati, and heard a discourse from the pastor, Dr. Beecher. Its subject was *the reasonableness of endless misery, and its consistency with the divine goodness*. Dr. B. is president of the Lane Seminary, and an ecclesiastic of very high reputation for learning and talents. Let us see what a gentleman of his calibre can do in a case of such difficulty. The following are the strong points in the discourse referred to.

"1st. God had a right to create minds, and it was benevolent in him to do so." Granted. "2nd. God had a right to institute laws for the government of minds so created." This too is granted. "3d. He had a right to guard his law by retributive sanctions." Very good. "4th. The system of government so instituted must last forever, for the same reasons will operate to keep it up which led at the first to its institution; and as its rewards and punishments are an essential part of the system, they must endure to eternity. Endless misery results of course." And if it does, endless *reward* results of course also, and what then becomes of the scriptural doctrine of salvation by grace? It goes by the root before this metaphysical axe of the Doctor's; *eternal life*, instead of being *the gift of God*, will be but a legal consequence of obedience to the divine government! But endless misery *does not* result; the Doctor's logic is purblind here. Suppose the criminal code of a land to last for a thousand years; does it follow that each transgressor under it must endure its penal inflictions for so long? That judge would be thought a whimsical expounder of the law, I fancy, who, finding the legal punishment for theft to be imprisonment, should, upon that ground, take it into his head that the culprit must be confined for so long as that statute should remain unaltered, if even to a hundred centuries! Moreover, if we allow the Doctor's consequence, on what basis will rest his own hopes of eternal blessedness? He has violated the law—its penalties are irrevocable, and therefore, (as he thinks,) eternal! We call a man a good logician who can prove all he wishes to prove; what may we call him who can prove a great deal more?

To reconcile endless misery with the divine benevolence, the Doctor had recourse to two illustrations; the first was to the following effect. A legislative body compose a code of laws for a particular realm; all their enactments are made with express reference to the public welfare; but in order to effect a result which shall be best on the whole, and for the generality, they find it absolutely necessary to append the penalties of perpetual imprisonment, and even a forfeiture of life in certain cases; whereupon an individual among them remonstrates—"Take care what you do, (he exclaims,) these penalties may come to bear upon some of yourselves, your children, or your children's children; therefore, be cautious how you proceed, for by this act you may possibly be sealing your own doom, or theirs." "What shall be done now?" (enquired the Doctor.) "Either the good of the whole public must be left unguarded through an overweening tenderness toward a comparatively few abandoned individuals, or they must be sacrificed to the general interest; which shall we prefer?"

This comparison betwixt a legislature and the deity is far more plausible than just; for no difficulties of the kind here supposed arise in God's way; he is never reduced to a choice between two or more evils; it is as perfectly in his power to secure the ultimate good of the whole as of a part; if I doubted this in regard to *every* individual part composing that whole, I should equally doubt it in regard to *any*. I wish our opponents would tell us at once whether they do or do not deny the divine omnipotence; for if they do not, why are they perpetually nibbling at it with this species of sophistry? But why do I speak of his power? His wisdom and benevolence are equally crippled by this sort of comparisons. He cannot frame a system of government, it would seem, which will not subject him to the hard necessity of foregoing the claims of benevolence with regard to some of his creatures, out of respect to the well-being of the greater number!

The Doctor's other illustration was less hacknied; I know not but it originated with himself. It was, in substance, as follows: "Suppose that before the work of creation was begun, the Almighty had anticipated it, by at once calling into momentary existence all the intelligences whom he contemplated ever to create, in order to obtain their vote upon the question whether they would prefer to *be*, (subject to all the liabilities of being, which are contemplated

by the doctrine of endless misery,) or to return to non-existence, and to remain non-existent forever." "I foresee (the Creator tells them,) that some of you will violate my laws, and subject yourselves to my eternal displeasure; but this will result from no decree or purpose of mine, but from the incurable perverseness of such individuals themselves, in despite of all the efforts of my goodness to prevent it. Will you, then, that I prosecute my purpose of creating you, to live forever, and subject to the risk (which shall only be realized in regard to a comparative few) that your being shall be rendered eternally miserable by disobedience; or shall I abandon my purpose, forgo my benevolent plan, with all the incalculable amount of enjoyment to millions of millions which shall result therefrom, merely out of regard to the relatively small quantity of misery which is unavoidably incident to it?" The universal vote in such a case would have been, (as the Doctor thinks,) "Create us; we will prefer to exist and take the risk, rather than to continue in eternal nothingness; and if any of us shall be so ungrateful as to violate our obligations to thy goodness, and so perverse as to rush through every obstacle of thy grace down to final ruin, we shall deserve the result, and we consent to abide it—let us live!"

My dear reader, I trust you are not such a dolt as to be unable to perceive the fallacy in the above case; it consists, you must see, in supposing Jehovah reduced to the alternative of either creating some beings for final misery, or not creating them at all! If this is not absurdity, essential, quintessential absurdity, then is there no such thing in the universe. Moreover, it is very doubtful if that assemblage of intelligences would, in the case supposed, have rendered any such vote, even allowing the proposition to have been presented in the soft and guarded terms which the Doctor has employed. But how, according to his doctrine, stands the reality? Certainly far less favorably than here represented. From the state of human society since the lapse of our first parents down to present times, (6000 years) I am warranted in saying, that if the notion of endless misery be true, ninety-nine hundredth's of mankind will be eternally lost! Would a multitude of beings deserve to be called intelligent, who should consent to accept of existence in view of any result approximating this? Would the Doctor himself consent to be the parent of any

given number of children, out of which a proportion, answering to that of the human family which shall sink to eternal woe, should certainly be *lost, ruined, abandoned to suffering and to infamy*, forever and ever? Let him deliberately and conscientiously respond to this question, ere he again depicts his Creator's character in the hues of his dark and repulsive theology.

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#### MILLENNIAL HYMN.

Oh Zion, arise! in thy glory appear,  
 Thy garments of beauty put on,  
 For the time of the singing of birds now is near,  
 And the voice of the turtle already we hear—  
 Thy winter is over and gone.

Too long have the harps of thine exiles been mute,  
 And sad on the willows have hung;  
 For they said, "in the land of the stranger-pollute—  
 Where we sow'd in despair—reap'd in anguish the fruit—  
 How can anthems of Zion be sung?"

But the time long foretold by thy prophets is near,  
 Rise! rise! for its dawning we see,  
 When thine exiles, redeem'd, shall in Zion appear,  
 And the hand of Jehovah shall wipe every tear,  
 And sighing and *sorrow* shall flee.

No more, then, forever thy sun shall go down,  
 Thy moon hide its brightness no more;  
 For God with the bliss of his presence shall crown,  
 That world on which darkness and sin never frown:  
 No night ever visits that shore.

Already the Gentiles are flocking to thee,  
 To share thy salvation they come,  
 From the ends of the earth, from the isles of the sea;  
 All kindreds and nations thy converts shall be,  
 And no more in transgression shall roam.

Oh hail, thou blest season! thou era of gold!  
 Thy beauties our bosoms inspire;  
 Thy glory shall soon in its fulness unfold;  
 All flesh the salvation of God shall behold,  
 And sin, death, and sorrow, expire.

## DIVINE PUNISHMENT,

ITS NATURE, ENDS, AND CERTAINTY, HARMONIZED WITH THE  
SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE OF FORGIVENESS.

“One of the most absurd features of the Universalian system,” (once remarked a respectable minister to me, in a conversation on these subjects,) “is the notion, that in the divine economy, *sin is never forgiven*, in the sense implying *an exemption from deserved punishment*! You nevertheless (continued he) affect to believe in the scripture doctrine of pardon upon the term of repentance; but how sin can be *pardoned*, and at the same time *punished*, I confess, surpasses my comprehension!” And yet, reader, there is no real solecism in this case. We are constantly witnessing facts which confirm the theory, that to pardon an offence, and yet to punish it, are acts not incompatible with each other. The case of Mr. B. is in point: gambling was his besetting vice; he lost at the gaming table the whole of his once large estate; but he has become a christian, and of course abjured his former evil practices; he has experienced forgiveness. But has the property he lost been restored to him? By no means: this penalty of his former sinfulness he must continue still to endure—hence it is plain that, though pardoned, he has not escaped punishment. Mr. S. is another instance to the same effect: he used to indulge a violent propensity for strife; the lightest occasion would excite his combativeness, and a fight was his first impulse. He lost an eye in one of his quarrels, which led him to reflect on the madness of his conduct. He is now, after many struggles, entirely cured of his pugnacious propensities—he is a reformed man, and enjoys the consciousness that his sins are remitted. Still, he has not regained his lost eye; he must continue to abide the deprivation as a penalty of his past folly. A hundred cases of the kind might be instanced, if necessary, to show that *forgiveness*, or a *liberation from sin*, does not imply *an exemption from the penalty due to it*. The reformed debauchee, for example, who by years of indulgence had wasted his bodily and mental energies, and contracted diseases which either must shorten his days, or render them days of suffering to him; when he became a christian, did he find repentance

to expel from his system these deleterious effects of a mispent life? No: but it proved a means of preventing an increase of those effects; for when the cause ceased, it ceased to produce results.

Exactly accordant with fact, as above illustrated, is the teaching of inspiration upon this head. Speaking of the divine dealings with the rebellious Israelites during their sojourn in the wilderness, David says, "Thou wast a God that forgavest them, though thou tookest vengeance of their inventions." (Ps. xc. 8.) In the psalmist's estimation, therefore, the *forgiving* of sin was not held to be incompatible with the *taking vengeance* of it. "I will certainly chastise you for that act, my son," (said father C.) "it must not be allowed to pass with impunity." And father C. did chastise his son accordingly. The boy was subdued; he saw the evil of his conduct—sought his father's forgiveness, and obtained it. The old man kissed the tears from the cheek of his child, and pressed him to his bosom. See you now how the punishment of sin is reconcileable with its pardon? If you do, you understand the philosophy of forgiveness as it is exhibited in the scriptures. "Wherein, then, (you will ask) consisteth the advantages of pardon upon this scheme?" They are great, my dear reader, and manifold; the pardoned are freed from their former vices, and, of course, from the effects that would follow from a continuance in them. They are recovered to virtue. Mr. B. no longer feels that fever of the soul arising from solicitude about the chances of the game. He is not startled from his nightly dreams by the phantoms of wretches whom his arts have reduced to penury, and their families to want of bread. By honest industry he is now repairing his own wrecked fortunes, and he therefore looks upon his wife and children with the satisfaction of knowing that he is no longer sporting with their interests and happiness for life. Such is the improvement in the condition of Mr. B. As to Mr. S., he is subject no more to bodily wounds and bruises; nor to agitations of spirit such as he experienced while a slave to angry passions. He is not now perpetually making to himself enemies of his neighbors, nor exposing himself to expensive and mortifying litigations—he lives in peace within himself, and with all around him. Would to God that the whole of the two classes of sinners whom these gentlemen are designed to represent, would, by a like



amendment, secure to themselves a similar change of condition ! I have said nothing of their spiritual enjoyments, arising from a religious life : these are incalculable. Oh ! the exquisite happiness of knowing that conscience, and God, and all the good of mankind, approve them ! Both these gentlemen, you perceive, reader, have experienced *forgiveness* ; but who can say that they have not also been *punished* ?

Errors in relation to punishment have naturally led to errors in relation to forgiveness. Those who have supposed the former to be *arbitrary* in their nature, have also well supposed that when God pleases, they can be dispensed with without injury to any body, or the contravention of any eternal principle ; and that forgiveness actually implies the setting aside these punishments. By the same class of theologians it is even gravely affirmed, that divine punishments are not designed for good to those upon whom they operate ! proceeding as they do from infinite goodness, and operating as they do upon creatures who are the subjects of that goodness, (for “ the Lord is good unto all,”) yet they are not designed for good to them ! I am at a loss whether to term this false philosophy, or no philosophy at all.

“ But if *for good*” (do you say, reader ?) “ then it were better to commit the more sin, in order to experience the more punishment ; the more of a good thing the better.” Why, my most shrewd reader, it would be a good act in one to help you out of a quagmire ; but you would not therefore jump into a quagmire for the sake of being helped out ! Should we not deem a man an idiot if he broke a limb, for the mere sake of having it set by a benevolent surgeon ? Now this will well illustrate the case ; for the setting of a fractured limb, although a *beneficial* operation, is yet a *painful* one ; and the same is true of the divine corrections. It is better, therefore, to avoid them by well-doing ; yet, when they are demerited, it is better that they be experienced, how painful soever, since, coming as they do from a Being who is infinitely wise, just, and merciful, they cannot but be productive of merciful results. “ And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him : For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with

you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now, no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." (Heb. xii. 5—11.) Thus we find the bible to speak very intelligibly as to the *ends* of divine punishment.

"But is this theory—plausible in itself, and accordant with scripture teaching—is it sustained by matter of fact? *Have* punishments a reforming tendency?" If they have not, then must it be admitted that they are *useless*: for they *cannot* repair the injury done by the offender; they *do not* prevent others from committing the same offence: and to say that they *vindicate the honor of the law*, is to put words together which have no intelligible meaning. They, then, are but *retaliatory*; their object is revenge—sheer revenge!

"But why does not the punishment of an offence more generally operate to prevent others from committing it?" An examination into the nature of punishment will explain this. Punishment is of two kinds, as to its *nature*—several, as to its *objects*. One kind may be termed *arbitrary*—the other *necessary*. Arbitrary punishment is such as results from the mere will of the punisher; it has no *natural* connexion with the offence. Necessary punishment is such as necessarily proceeds from the sin itself; it is an unavoidable consequence of it. In the one, an outward executioner is required; in the other, sin is its *own* executioner. The stroke of the one may therefore be dodged; the stroke of the other is as inevitable as fate. To illustrate. Tell a man that murder will bring him to the gallows, and his mind will respond—"Yes, provided, 1st, that I am *detected*: 2nd, that I am *convicted*: 3rd, that I am *not pardoned*: 4th, that I do not *break jail and escape*: 5th, or *die a natural death* before the day of execution: 6th, or do not *despatch myself* in some other way: 7th, or am *not forcibly rescued*." Now it is certain that either of these accidents may prevent the catastrophe.

Hence it will be seen, that between murder and hanging there is no *natural* connexion. The connexion is *arbitrary*, hence its *uncertainty*. Here then is the reason why, in all countries, sanguinary laws have failed to diminish the number of crimes. Now let us see whether divine punishments can be thus evaded. What is the *natural* penalty of murder? It is *remorse*—fierce, unremitting, dreadful remorse. Is there any escape from these effects? None. The wretch may traverse oceans; may fly to remotest lands; may seek to hide himself in trackless deserts, or the inaccessible wilds of nature—vain, all his efforts! the voice of his brother's blood crieth out against him from the ground. No outward judicatory is needed here: no judge, nor jurors, nor witnesses. He has all within himself. He dares not to enter a plea of not guilty; conscience, if he did, would overwhelm him with its thunders. No mockery of the kind is admissible in the court with which he has to do. How many a wretch thus hunted down, although no clue existed by which man could trace the crime of blood-guiltiness to his skirts, has voluntarily surrendered himself to the action of the law, preferring to die an ignominious death rather than to suffer longer from the goadings of remorse? You may tell me, that in some countries murder, in some cases, is not held to be a crime, and is therefore not productive of the consequences described. Very well—where it is not known to be a crime, no guilt can be incurred in the commission of it; yet, even then, *as a wrong*, its evil effects are not the less certain. The savage who deems revenge a duty, and buries his hatchet in the skull of an enemy, is in constant fear of a reaction of the same law of revenge upon himself. Even pirates, and bandits, who, by custom, have learned to set small value on the life of a fellow-being, have the greater reason, from that very cause, to dread falling victims to the avarice, or the bloodthirstiness of each other. *In the government of God, there is, there can be, no escape from deserved punishment.*

“Not even by repentance?” No, not even by repentance. Jehovah has himself declared, that he “will by *no means* clear the guilty.” (Ex. xxxiv. 7.) “Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.” (Gal. vi. 7.) “Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished.” (Prov. xi. 1.) If God will clear the guilty by the means of repentance, will he not be clearing them by *some* means? According to Paul, he “will render unto every

man according to his deeds." (Rom. ii. 6.) But how so, if, in regard to many, no retribution for evil deeds will ever be rendered at all?

Arbitrary punishments are the only ones within human power to inflict—we cannot make wickedness *punish itself*; hence, we append to transgression certain penal pains, which, being by nature wholly unconnected with it, may or may not take effect, as mere accident shall determine. The popular theology represents the divine penalties of sin as being equally arbitrary, and, therefore, equally uncertain! That I may be perfectly comprehended in this branch of my subject, I will once more illustrate the difference betwixt *positive* and *moral* (in other words *arbitrary* and *necessary*) punishments, by the sin of our first parents and its penalty.

The divine threatening in regard to the tree was, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." We understand this death to have been *moral* in its nature—consisting of condemnation, debasement, &c.; such as we are given to know they really did experience on the day of transgression, and such as naturally resulted, and must ever result, from the doing an unlawful deed. We suppose that the punishment could not possibly have been dispensed with; and that whether it had been threatened or not, it would have resulted from the act just as it did; because it was a natural and necessary consequence from it. It is even doubtful if Jehovah originated the connexion between sin and suffering, or whether he could dissolve it. But, supposing it possible to have set aside the penalty in the case, it certainly would have operated to the injury of the culprit, who would have been encouraged to argue thus within himself:—"I once transgressed the law of God, and no evil result ensued; hence, I find that misery is not an inevitable consequence of sin, it only takes place as Jehovah pleases; it then is not an evil in itself, for if it were, it would of itself produce evil effects; and since it pleased God that it should not in this instance, the same may happen in all future instances." Emboldened by this persuasion, he sins, and sins again, and when at length vengeance does ensue, he thinks that inasmuch as it was not necessary, it might as well have been dispensed with, and it was therefore unkind in God to inflict it.

Now, the popular theology supposes that the *death* in the threat-

ening above noticed, implied *the being doomed to eternal flames!* Can any body see any *necessary*, any *reasonable* connexion between the eating of an interdicted apple, and the suffering in ceaseless fire? It is not even pretended by those who take this view of the subject, that the penalty threatened was otherwise than *arbitrary*; and, accordingly (as they think) a pretext was easily found for setting it aside! *They did not die!* God relented! (The snake had predicted this conclusion of the affair, and our friends confirm the truth of the prediction.) The culprits were dismissed with a half-angry and half-approving reprimand!

I do not affirm that in the administration of the divine government, arbitrary punishments have never occurred; in scripture times, it would seem, the divine dealings with men were more direct and visible than they have since been. In those days, outward and sensible expressions of his displeasure against sin sometimes occurred; as in the deluge, the destruction of Sodom, Babylon, Tyre, Sidon, and Jerusalem. It is not pretended, that in this class of punishments, the reformation of the punished is the *immediate* object; they are meant as examples to others, and therefore they are benevolent, although not directly so to the subjects themselves; yet they must even to them prove ultimately so, it being no part of Jehovah's policy to sacrifice the eternal interests of a part, to secure those of the residue, for several reasons. 1st. He is under no such necessity. 2nd. He can as easily make all eventually happy as to make a part so. 3d. He loves one portion of his creatures as well as another. And, 4th, must therefore prefer the final good of all before the final good of some. These outward punishments are exceptions to the general scheme of divine retribution; they have but seldom occurred, and are called his "strange work." (Isa. xxviii. 21.)

I have said, *it is even doubtful if Jehovah originated the connexion betwixt sin and misery.* I must take this back. I prefer to resolve all causes, with their effects, into the all-wise appointment of the infinite God; more especially as the scriptures afford me examples to this effect; and, besides, there is so evident a mercy in the law of which I speak, that it seems a dictate of reason as well as piety, to account for its existence on the ground of divine institution. It can scarcely be necessary for me to prove this the bible view of the case. Nevertheless, I will adduce a

few instances. The following is the language of Elihu, the only one of Job's friends whose discourse God did not disapprove. "That he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man. He keepeth back his soul from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword. He is chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong pain: so that his life abhorreth bread and his soul dainty meat. His flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen; and his bones that were not seen, stick out. Yea, his soul draweth near unto the grave, and his life to the destroyers. If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to show unto man his uprightness; then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom. His flesh shall be fresher than a child's: he shall return to the days of his youth. He shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him; and he shall see his face with joy: for he will render unto man his righteousness. He looketh upon men; and if any say, I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not; he will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light. Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man, to bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living." (Job xxxiii. 17—30.) The same Elihu also exclaims, "Surely it is meet to be said unto God, I have borne chastisement, I will not offend any more." (Job xxxiv. 31.) Jeremiah takes a similar view in regard to the sufferings brought on themselves by the Israelites, whom he personates under the name of Ephraim. "I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus, Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke: turn thou me and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God. Surely after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth. Is Ephraim my dear son? is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still; therefore my bowels are troubled for him: I will surely have mercy upon him saith the Lord." (Jer. xxxi. 18—20.) And the sufferings entailed upon the same people by an invasion of their country, is by the same prophet accounted for in the same way throughout his book of Lamentations; and they are also rep-

resented as issuing in the same gracious ends. "For the Lord will not cast off for ever. But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies. For he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men. To crush under his feet all the prisoners of the earth. To turn aside the right of a man before the face of the Most High. To subvert a man in his cause, the Lord approveth not. Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not? Out of the mouth of the Most High proceedeth not evil and good? Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins? Let us search and try our ways and turn again to the Lord." (Lam. iii. 31—40.) David, enumerating the blessings of providence upon himself and his household, represents the following as the divine promise in regard to his children. "If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail." (Ps. lxxxix. 30—33.) Now it is absolutely pitiful, yea, contemptible, to give to passages of this nature a partial application, as if Jehovah does not in his dealings with each and all of the transgressors of his law, observe the same eternal principles of mercy and justice!

Let us attend now to the *modus operandi* of divine punishments. I have before considered the case of the gambler, but we may take a more difficult view of it. We will suppose, then, that he constantly rises from the game a *winner*; how, in that event, does he get his punishment? Is he not rather rewarded for his wickedness, and encouraged to proceed in it? He would be encouraged, indeed, if he fared as well as you, reader, seem to suppose; and in that case, why shall we not all turn gamblers, since we are lured to it by the flowers which providence strews in that path! Reader, dismiss this delusion; for such, and a very destructive one, it really is. I will tell you how the successful gambler gets his punishment. It does not follow from the fact that he always has won, that he therefore always shall; one more expert than himself may at any moment strip him of all his past gains; his very successes serve to lessen his caution, and embolden him to venture larger stakes; hence, it often happens that his entire for-

tune is vibrating upon the chances of the moment; he may arise with double his present wealth, or without a penny. What must be his mental perturbation when so much is depending on such shifting hazards? Anxiety of this nature, so feverish, so intense, is rapid in its progress of eating out the soul. But aside from this, has he no reasons for disquietude in regard to his victims, some of whom he may have rendered desperate by despair at their losses, and may visit their ruin upon his head? Let him who wishes to portray the career of a gambler as pleasant, go to a Parisian or a London hell, (rightly named,) to borrow his lights and shades for the picture. Would you, reader, exchange your life of quiet and of honest self-approval, for his, of turbulence and apprehension?

Consider, next, the case of the dishonest man. Suppose him so adroit in his arts that he is never detected; is he therefore never punished? Why then starts he at every leaf that rustles near him? Why those uneasy glances when he hears approaching footsteps? Why cannot he look his honest neighbors in the face, but his eye must be constantly cowering beneath their glance? And consider, moreover, in addition to the suffering which these circumstances indicate, how many painful risks of detection he runs, how much time he spends in plotting and executing his felonies; which, employed in honest industry, would bring him equal gains, with more certainty and less suffering; and when he prowls forth in the darkness to effect his disgraceful purposes, what dangers of various nature he must necessarily encounter. Pah! his bread is bitter and hard-earned!\*

I might detail the penalties attendant on the different crimes in practice amongst mankind—lying, adultery, fornication, drunkenness, &c.; each has its own appropriate pains and dangers; each

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\* The case of Johnson, of Cincinnati, is an instance to the point, that great danger is incurred even by the most expert marauders. This man had for a number of years, as it afterwards appeared, been in the habit of committing burglaries, and with such secrecy and success, that he had amassed a large quantity of stolen goods together, to the value of several thousand dollars; nor does it appear that in all that time his character and conduct were suspected. One morning, the keepers of a wholesale store in the city found their door to have been opened in the night, and on entering a spectacle of a horrid description presented itself—it was the dead body of the burglar, mangled in such a manner as baffled all attempts to identify him, until by accident (or led by a suspicion of the fact) his own daughter approached, examined him, and by a particular mark on his person discovered the dreadful truth, that the mangled wretch before her was her father! He had in the darkness fallen from the third loft through the scuttle. What a death to die! and in what a cause!



brings with it an entailment of shame, and loss, and remorse. Need I enlarge, reader ? I trow not, because your own bosom is at this moment throbbing responses in harmony with these statements—it knows that you never sinned but the regularity of its throb was interrupted, and the quiet of its empire invaded.

“ But conscience becomes callous after a while,” say you, “ and the sinner of every kind learns to perpetrate his deeds without compunction ; hence, instead of increasing with the ratio of guilt, (as justice would seem to require,) punishment actually diminishes as crime increases.” A specious objection, I grant you, reader, very specious ; but you overlook the fact that this moral insensibility is itself a punishment—the greatest of punishments. When thus given over to hardness of heart and a seared, a cicatrised conscience, the individual has in a manner lost his moral nature ; it is absorbed in the animal, the brute ; all the nicer chords of his being, whence formerly sprung the more refined enjoyments of his life, have lost their harmonies ; these delicate barriers betwixt his soul and infamy being broken down, he is lost henceforth to conscience, and modesty, and self-respect, and a respect for public opinion ; he is become an absolute wretch, a beacon set up by providence amidst the rocks of crime, as a caution to others to avoid a similar degradation. And reckon you this among your instances of exemption from present suffering ? I pray heaven that of all its numerous and dreadful retributive dispensations, I may especially be preserved from this !

Thus it is seen, that such is the order of things in the economy of providence, that each sin necessarily entails its own penal consequences ; that escape from these, otherwise than by an avoidance of the causes which produce them, is absolutely impossible. It is by this class of penalties that the most of men are restrained from crime ; even where there is no written or positive law, these exert their influence ; and their efficacy would be incalculably greater than it commonly is, if preachers and moralists were not perpetually diverting men’s attention from them, and directing it to punishments of a factitious and uncertain character, which terrify only, when they can be made to appear as unavoidable and near at hand ; and they then serve but as instruments for waking up vague and superstitious apprehensions ; not for establishing rational and permanent checks upon our vicious inclinations : it

is not in the nature of things that the latter object should be thus accomplished.\*

No person, of sane mind, will voluntarily thrust his hand into the fire. Why? Because he knows that pain would be the certain consequence. He does not love pain, and he therefore avoids an act which he knows would incur it. Suppose he were equally sure that sin will produce suffering, would he not have equal reason for avoiding *it* also? He would, undoubtedly: and hence is proven the importance of convincing men that misery is an absolutely certain result of wickedness; and in order to their being so convinced, they must be shown that the two things are naturally and necessarily connected together.

"But the comparison is not good," (you may say,) "for we have no inducement to thrust a hand into the fire, even if no painful effect followed—whereas we have an inducement to sin, in the immediate pleasure which sin affords." Very well—we must then have recourse to another illustration. Many people are prevented from eating honey, although it is extremely agreeable to their palate, by the acute cholic-pains which they have experienced from the using it. Perhaps their fondness for it induced them to hope, at first, that these pains were merely accidental;

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\* The following facts prove the correctness of the above statement; they are contained in an expose of the conduct of the Professors and Students of the OBERLIN INSTITUTE, Ohio, by Delazon Smith, *A Student*. These men are new-light Presbyterians, and, of course, christians, *par excellence*; firm believers in eternal torments, and, without doubt, very sincere by fits and starts, or, when the danger of these torments affecting themselves, is felt to be imminent. This end is frequently accomplished for a time by what are termed *revivals of religion*; it was during such a season, that the following facts, relative to the character of the Professors and Students, were disclosed by themselves. President Mahan doubted, he said, if he had ever been a christian, or had ever understood the christian religion. Professor Morgan confessed the same, and in addition, that he had committed very great and grievous sins, *in making an idol of his young wife*. Professor Cowles said he was in a like predicament with the others of the faculty. U. T. Chamberlain said, that on leaving Lane Seminary, Cincinnati, he *stole*, and brought off a quantity of *Joiners' tools*—also, that his pride had kept him from praying for three weeks together, because some of his brethren could *pray better than he could*!—moreover, he had been in the habit of *robbing hen-roosts, lying*, and other *gross sins*. Oliver D. Hibbard (now Principal of the Foreign Missionary Society at Oberlin) confessed to a disbelief in the Holy Ghost; to lying, and divers other hypocrisies. G. L. Hovey had been *dishonest in his dealings*; had *stolen*, and committed almost every abomination; and, among others, had *lied*, when standing in the sacred desk! J. Warren had been guilty of almost every abomination—among others, *fornication and adultery*. Henry Fairchild had been so *proud* of his power of *converting sinners*, that he had *lied*, and *misrepresented*, in order to increase the fame of his success. Rev. George Whipple had been very licentious, and depraved in his habits, particularly in a certain act, too indelicate to be here mentioned. These confessions, it must be remembered, relate to their conduct while they stood before the world as christians; yea, as teachers of religion! What reliance, I ask now, can be placed in the efficacy of threatened punishments, even of the most terrible kind, which may, by repentance, or other means, be wholly evaded?

but on their experiencing the same result whenever they ate of it, they were convinced of its being an inseparable consequence; and they were therefore induced to abandon the indulgence in it altogether. I ask, now, if these cholic-pains do not impose a more effectual check upon their appetite for the honey, than would an interdict on pain of imprisonment, or even of damnation? It assuredly does, and for this good reason: these cholic affections, they know, cannot be eluded; they may be accounted for on physiological principles; their connexion with the cause that produces them is necessary, and therefore, unavoidable: whereas, betwixt the eating of honey and the being imprisoned, or damned, there is no necessary connection whatever. How immeasurably important, then, is it to the interests of virtue, that men be faithfully instructed as to *the certainty* of the penal consequences of transgression! For what care they how hot is the hell with which they are menaced, or how durable are its agonies, so long as they are persuaded that, how many, or enormous soever their crimes, they shall escape the punishment altogether? Hence, a transmundane hell is an impotent bug-bear.

You may tell a person who has an appetite (or a passion, I know not which to term it,) for intoxicating drinks, that if he dies a drunkard he will be eternally damned. What cares he for such a threat? All depends on an *if*—*if* he dies a drunkard; but he does not calculate on dying such—not he: his purpose is to stop in good time, and, by repentance, get to heaven at last. No, no; the steps to drunkenness are not to be thus arrested—not thus can you resist the momentum of that reckless propensity, by which so many a fellow-being is impelled on to certain and protracted ruin. Still, the case is not utterly hopeless, if, *before he has become a slave to the maddening bowl*, you can but gain his attention to the voice of reason and fact, and can portray to him in the dreadful colors of truth, the deep, deep infamy, to which a begun indulgence will almost inevitably lead—the bloated countenance; the blood-shot eye; the fevered pulse; the heart on fire, and requiring continual draughts to cool it; the intellects bewildered; faculties destroyed; prospects blasted; person rendered loathsome by filth and rags; and then the nausea that succeeds debauch; the shame; the scoffs, jeers, and dram-shop blasphemies; and oh! worst of all, a broken-hearted wife; squalid and starv

ing children; a desolate household; a death-bed in a ditch at last—a drunkard's ignominious grave, and execrated memory! Such is the hell to which many a wretch (alas! how many,) is drifted on the fiery tide of rum.

And since sin impairs our moral nature, there is evident mercy in thus connecting misery with it so inseparably; and the scriptures, accordingly, represent the divine retributions as being prompted by mercy. "Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy: for thou renderest to every man according to his work." (Ps. lxii. 12.) And yet popular theologians are wont to consider the business of divine punishment as so exclusively *just* in its nature, that were God *all mercy*, he would dispense with it entirely! This grows out of the mistake of supposing, that justice and mercy are opposed to each other: in which case, mercy is usually confounded with excessive lenity—justice, with stern revenge. He who has enjoined the "not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing," (1. Pet. iii. 9.) will eternally outrage the principle in his own conduct toward sinners!

Some, however, may seek to improve my argument as to the *nature* of punishment, to the purpose of shewing that it may be *endless, independent of the divine agency*; and consequently, without furnishing ground of complaint against God. "For if, as you affirm," (they may say) "the penalty of sin grows out of its nature, necessarily, and unavoidably—if it is not an arbitrary infliction—why may it not, *of itself*, continue forever, and the divine character be wholly unconcerned in the business?" It is no uncommon thing for the advocates of ceaseless woe to place their defence of that doctrine on this very ground. "We don't believe" (say they) "in a local hell—a hell of material fire. The sinner's misery will be constituted of remorse—keen and poignant remorse; which, like an undying worm, shall gnaw within them to all eternity." Nay, good friends, this refinement upon the old fashioned notion of hell, will not do; it implies an impossibility. The soul (by which, I mean our moral nature,) is so constituted, that none of the affections thereof can be exercised forever, without a perpetual action of the exciting cause. They may be compared to fires, which will burn out in time, except new fuel be added; or to springs, whose waters will exhaust, except kept up

by constant new supplies. Take, for instance, the affection of joy ; you know, that to however rapturous a degree it may be excited, it will subside at length, unless it be renewed by fresh objects. The same is true of *sorrow* ; you are bereaved by death of a beloved object, and your heart is thrown into deep anguish, *so deep*, that you suppose it will never be in your power to smile again : however, the very intenseness of your grief causes it to exhaust the sooner. Such is also the case with *remorse*. God must re-constitute the soul before any of its affections can last forever, without a constant renewal of the exciting cause. *A hell of remorse*, therefore, cannot be unceasing, except sin (the source of remorse) shall also be so. This philosophy is in accordance with indisputable fact, and it utterly puts to flight the idea of an *endless moral hell*.

Neither can punishment of a *physical* kind be endless, without a perpetual miracle ; pain cannot be endured without wear and detriment to the nature which sustains it. Pain, in any part of the system, necessarily implies a process by which, if it continue long enough, the part must be destroyed. But endless misery implies that the subject thereof shall endure to all eternity ; and therefore, he will forever be wasting, decaying, wearing out, without ever being wholly wasted, or consumed—which is a paradox ; a contradiction ; an impossibility. I appeal to you, reader, if living proofs of this position are not constantly presenting themselves to your observation ? How pain attenuates the system ! how destructive is its influence upon both body and mind ! In order, then, to the sinner's being susceptible of misery without end, God, by a perpetual miracle, must counteract the impairing effects of misery upon the sinner's constitution ; and in how much worse a light the Almighty Jehovah can be represented than as thus employed, I leave you, dear reader, to judge.

It is most wisely and benevolently contrived, in the existing order of things, that the very effects of an evil tend to its cure. What caused the prodigal to resolve on a return to his father ? It was the desperate extremity to which he had become reduced by sin. It is not probable that the thoughts of home would have seriously affected his purposes, if his affairs abroad had been in a more favorable posture ; and I appeal to every gospel minister, whether his preaching does not much oftener take effect on ex-

treme and flagrant offenders, than on those who sin within more moderate limits? Little thought the prodigal's elder brother that he himself stood in need of mercy, when he so grudged its lavish exercise toward the ragged penitent just returned; and it is usually difficult indeed, to convict such persons of guilt, or of the necessity of reformation: for, as their departures from rectitude have been comparatively moderate, their compunctions are likewise so. Mary weeps at Jesus' feet, regardless of the conventional forms and ceremonies of propriety; she is wholly bent on easing her oppressed heart of its weight of remorseful anguish, while Simon, the Pharisee, sits by, a cold and captious critic upon her conduct. Poor Mary had sinned much, and therefore felt much; but Simon had only trespassed within the bounds of decency, (as the world phrases it,) and he, therefore, was troubled with fewer and less poignant compunctions. Thus it is seen, that the very excesses of an evil tend to bring about its removal; and most strikingly is the goodness of Jehovah manifested in this arrangement. We find it to obtain in all the departments of providence. When our atmosphere becomes surcharged with impurities, insomuch that it is unfitted for respiration, the effect is, that those agitations are generated which we term storms, thunder-gusts, etc., and these consequences of the evil effect its cure. When the human body becomes diseased, from accident or careless exposure to the elements, the disease affects the system in various ways; it may produce discharges of the superfluous and feculent humors through the stomach or the bowels, or by means of cutaneous eruptions, morbid issues, etc., which effects it is the office of the physician not to check, (save in cases of excess,) but to promote; and, in proportion as the effects are facilitated, is the cause removed. The same law, as before remarked, operates with full force in the moral system. Sin is a moral disease—it induces moral nausea; the soul hath its aches, and its rheums, and its feverish heats and thirsts, its restlessness and its torpor, as well as the body. Let the moral mediciner not attempt to sooth these, whilst the cause (which is sin) continues in full operation; let him not administer anodynes to the guilty spirit: on the contrary, let him arouse its faculties; set its crimes in startling array before it; deepen, if possible, the poignancy of its remorse, until the cause of the disease is subdued; let him then

be careful to impress upon the patient this truth—this momentous truth, that a soul diseased by sin, must ever, by an unalterable law of heaven, be a subject of like sufferings. This truth impressed, it will be then time enough to dismiss his convalescent patient with the voice of soothing—"Go, and sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon thee."

Yes, I repeat it—fearless of successful contradiction—*endless misery*, whether physical in its nature, or moral, or both combined, *is*, except sin be also endless, *an absolute impossibility*. I say not that Omnipotence could not inflict it; by a perpetual miracle he could, undoubtedly; but then, it would be a miracle of wrath, of cruelty, of revenge! Such an anomaly as that of Almighty love, directing its energies to ends of hatred, would fill the boundless universe with astonishment and dismay!

"But why" (you may ask) "may not sin be continued to all eternity? For, if it can, then by your own admission, misery can also." Yes, I admit that if the one is to be endless in duration, the other shall be so likewise. Let us inquire, however, whence sin proceeds: we shall find it proceeds wholly, and altogether, from our animal nature; hence the scriptures commonly speak of it as an offspring of the *flesh*; and although I would by no means exonerate our moral powers from a participation in the guilt thereof, yet it seems highly probable, that apart from our fleshly constitution sin cannot exist. "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like." (Gal. v. 19—21.) In the spiritual world, it is presumed there will be no gold to tempt our *avarice*; no strong drinks to gratify a propensity for *drunkenness*; no opportunities of conquest to excite *ambition*; no conflicts of interest to engender *malice*, *envy*, or *strife*; no sexual provocatives to *lust*; nor temptations to *fraud*, *falsehood*, or *deceit*. If sin is to exist in eternity, I should like to know what are to be its objects! and what the nature of the propensities which shall produce it! Can we sin when envy, lust, ambition, malice, and the like passions, with all our animal appetites, shall have ceased to be? Setting aside those scripture testimonies, then, which respect the eventual extinction of evil, and the reconciliation of all intelligences to

God, we have common-sense reasons for believing, that sin will not continue beyond the limits of our present being : there seems a strong probability, at least, that its existence is incompatible with the spiritual nature of man in the resurrection state.\*

The only view of endless suffering which, nowadays, is even attempted to be reconciled with the divine mercy, is that which supposes it is to operate as an example to others. I have already noticed, and I think, refuted this notion. I have shown that there can be no necessity, on the part of Omnipotence, to awe the universe by eternal exhibitions of his wrath, in order that he may secure its obedience. Ah ! human ingenuity may do much ; it may sound the depths of oceans ; it may tell the number and the magnitude of the stars ; it may measure the altitude of mountains whose snowy summits are miles above the clouds ; it may navigate the air, and find its way to distant lands across trackless seas ; it may estimate the speed of light ; it may arrest the electric bolts of heaven, and soar to — ; in short, it may do any thing which is possible in itself. But to reconcile with infinite love the infliction of endless pains upon short-sighted creatures, *is not possible in itself*, and therefore human ingenuity must fail in that attempt.

What should we think of the wretch, who in cool blood should load one of his children with irons, confine him in a dark and solitary cell, limit his diet to a scanty morsel of bread and water per diem, until worn out by days and nights of suffering, attenuated to the pale and meager image of despair, he could exhibit him to his other children as a sample of his power of torturing, in order to secure their obedience through the medium of their fears ? We should justly esteem such a wretch a very prodigy of cruelty. Nevertheless, I put it to your conscience, reader, whether the Being who can chain down myriads of his own offspring, for similar purposes, in a boiling ocean of flame, is not immeasurably worse than even he ? Almighty God ! man, in portraying thy character, has dipt his pencil into the darkest tints of his own heart !

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\* I may be here told, that the devil and his angels could sin without an animal nature ; and that, therefore, the same may be equally practicable to us when we depart this life. Be it remembered, however, that I deny the premises ; and common sense utterly repudiates the idea, that any high order of intelligences should prove themselves such idiots as to engage in an open war with Omnipotence ! I assign to the popular notion, therefore, concerning personal devils, an eminent and undoubted place amongst old wives' fables.



No, no—*endless* exemplary punishment will not do ; nor will any form or purpose of endless punishment. Nothing will do, which makes punishment an ultimate object, rather than a means ; for it ceases to be punishment in that view of it—it is revenge, or cruelty, or something of that nature, but not punishment, surely ; that were a sad misnomer !

I am contending that punishment, (as well as reward,) under the government of an infinitely just and merciful Being, must be *present* and *certain*. I own I am extremely anxious to succeed in making this point clear ; and I may therefore introduce the same idea again and again, in different forms, in order that I may not fail of making myself perfectly intelligible. We will now take another view of it.

We distinguish between what is good and what is bad, by their respective effects ; if the fruit of a tree be uniformly agreeable to our tastes, and healthful to our systems, nothing is more probable, than that we will often have recourse to it ; if it even at times be not immediately pleasing to our palates, so that it prove invariably beneficial to our healths, we will still be likely to resort to it for the latter reason. By this tree I would represent virtue ; its fruit is *generally* pleasing, and *always* wholesome. On the other hand, if we find another tree, of sometimes inviting appearance, whose fruit (although luscious to the taste, at times,) never fails to produce, in those who eat of it, the most painful and deleterious consequences, will we not naturally incline to shun it ? Will fence be needed to guard this tree ? or sentinel dog ? or any devices of the kind ? No, indeed ; its own bad qualities are its best protection. By this tree I would represent vice ; sweet in the mouth its fruit may sometimes be, but invariably bitter in the stomach. I cannot quite subscribe to the popular distich, that

“ Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,  
As to be hated, needs but to be seen.”

In regard to some vices, this is undoubtedly true ; but not in regard to all. Some assume so fair and specious an appearance, that the whole strength of virtuous principle is requisite for resisting their blandishments : like sirens, they enchant the senses of the unwary voyager on life's treacherous sea, and beguile him among the rocks, where he makes fearful shipwreck of his peace. Were it otherwise, we should have no inducements to sin ; vir-

true would have no trials, and would deserve no recompense. However, whether sin is or is not uniformly odious in appearance, one thing is certain, viz : that its influences are always bitter upon those who practice it. To sin, of every kind, may properly be applied what Solomon has said of one species of it. "For the lips of a strange woman drop as a honey-comb, and her mouth is smoother than oil : but her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. Her feet go down to death ; her steps take hold on hell. Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house ; lest thou give thine honor unto others, and thy years unto the cruel ; lest strangers be filled with thy wealth, and thy labors be in the house of a stranger : and thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed, and say, how have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof." (Prov. v. 3—5, 8—12.) If the order of things were otherwise than as here set forth—if vice did not injuriously affect those who practice it until they died, and the evil were then past remedy forever, how incalculably disastrous would be the consequences ! and what a reflection against the divine wisdom and equity would this arrangement involve ! Consider it seriously, reader, I pray you. We are not *now* to learn the evil nature of sin from its *present* effects, when we might profit by the lesson—no, no ; this is to be proven to our experience when the discovery will be too late to avail us ; when the overwhelming realities of it will be final, hopeless, irremediable ! And such is the wisdom and the benevolence of a God, in his treatment of his creatures ! He strews the path of sin with roses ; man is wooed to tread in it by the mystic and winning voices of the passions and appetites ; he is lulled into fancied security by the deceitful influences of a false peace ; meanwhile, in the far-off horizon before him, a tempest of wrath is gathering against his spirit, and at a moment when he looks not for it, it will burst forth with a fearful ruin upon his head : he will be startled from his delusive dream at length, and find himself undone past recovery ! And thus God deals with man ! Oh, false and treacherous theology ! yet, how cherished ! how venerated, as the very truth of heaven ! One's acquaintance with the bible must be imperfect, indeed, to be unable from its pages to refute so gross an error.

Is virtue not now rewarded ? Let the following scripture testi-

monies answer. "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. O taste and see that the Lord is good : blessed is the man that trusteth in him. O fear the Lord, ye his saints : for there is no want to them that fear him. The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger : but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing. Come, ye children, hearken unto me ; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good ? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. Depart from evil and do good ; seek peace, and pursue it. The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry. The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth and delivereth them out of all their troubles. The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart ; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous : but the Lord delivereth him out of them all. He keepeth all his bones : not one of them is broken. The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants ; and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate." (Ps. xxxiv. 7—15, 17—20, 22.) "Trust in the Lord, and do good ; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. Delight thyself also in the Lord ; and he shall give thee the desires of thy heart. Commit thy way unto the Lord ; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass : and he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noon-day. But the meek shall inherit the earth ; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord ; and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down ; for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand." (Ps. xxxvii. 3—6, 11, 23, 24.) "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust : his truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night ; nor for the arrow that flieth by day ; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness ; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noon-day. There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways."

(Ps. xci. 1, 3—6, 10, 11.) “The righteous shall flourish like the palm-tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing.” (Ps. xcii. 12—14.) “Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding: for the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her. Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honour. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy is every one that retaineth her.” (Prov. iii. 13—18.)

Are the wicked now punished? Here are scripture answers. “The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth. Evil shall slay the wicked; and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate.” (Ps. xxxiv. 16, 21.) “Fret not thyself because of evil-doers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity; for they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb. The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, and to slay such as be of upright conversation. Their sword shall enter into their own heart, and their bows shall be broken. A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked. I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay-tree: yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not; yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.” (Ps. xxxvii. 1, 2, 14—16, 35, 36.) “Envy thou not the oppressor, and choose none of his ways. For the froward is abomination to the Lord: but his secret is with the righteous. The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked: but he blesseth the habitation of the just.” (Prov. iii. 31—33.) “He loveth transgression that loveth strife; and he that exalteth his gate seeketh destruction. He that hath a froward heart findeth no good; and he that hath a perverse tongue falleth into mischief.” (Prov. xvii. 19, 20.) “Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that

tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thy heart shall utter perverse things: Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast." (Prov. xxiii. 29—34.) "I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding: and, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down. Then I saw, and considered it well; I looked upon it, and received instruction. Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: so shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth; and thy want as an armed man." (Prov. xxiv. 30—34.) Let these testimonies suffice out of many; very many; they are enough to establish the bible decision of the point, that "the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth, much more the wicked and the sinner." (Prov. xi. 31.)

In, order, then that punishment should be effective of the ends intended by it—in order to its fulfilling its purposed objects in the scheme of divine government, it is seen that it must be *certain*; it must also be a *natural consequence of sin*—as necessarily connected with it as other effects are with their causes; and it must also be *proportionate to the offence*. Hence, the scriptures constantly speak of the divine retributions as being *according to our deeds*. But does the doctrine of endless misery so represent it? Nay, verily, but quite the contrary.

Charles and Henry were brothers—twin brothers; they grew together until they had attained their 20th year, when Charles died; and as he made no profession of religion, he was sentenced to endless pains. Had Henry died at the same time, he would have shared a similar doom, for he was as destitute of religion as his brother; luckily for him, however, he lived until his 70th year, during the whole of which time he was in an unconverted state, excepting the last six months: for the last six months he had lived a pious life, and, consequently, was admitted after his death to heaven. "The punishment of sin," saith the theory of endless misery, "does not take place here, but is deferred until the parties arrive in the spiritual world." \_Consequently, Henry

received no punishment in this world for his long career of sinfulness; and it will not be pretended that he received it after he arrived in heaven—he was therefore not punished at all! But how fares it with his brother Charles? He, poor fellow, must welter in unceasing flames for the crimes of his brief existence on earth! Has God rendered to these twins according to their works?

The above, I think, is not a strained view of the subject; on the contrary, it corresponds to facts which, if the notion of endless misery be true, are constantly transpiring. Not only is it commonly supposed that a man may secure an exemption from just punishment by repentance, and after serving sin for the main part of his life, be prepared in a few days, or hours, or even moments, for heavenly bliss—but it is also supposed by Arminians, that if a christian be overtaken with sin at the last, and die unpardoned, although the whole of his former days may have been devoted to virtue, yet he shall sink to hell, and be lost past redemption! It is indeed impossible to avoid innumerable and most gross anomalies in connexion with that doctrine, and for the reason that it is essentially absurd in itself. In the theory of forgiveness and of punishment, as herein advocated, and which has been shown to be in striking agreement with scripture and fact, no such anomalies are involved: it seems to meet all the requirements of reason and justice—it reflects a glory and a praise upon the all-perfect Creator and Ruler of the universe—and it affords a guarantee that the great and benevolent ends of his government, (which can be nothing less than the promotion of the greatest possible amount of eventual good to the greatest possible number of his subjects,) shall be infallibly and triumphantly achieved.

“That be far from thee,” said Abraham, when God had revealed to him his purpose of destroying the Sodomites, and the patriarch was remonstrating against the involving the good and the bad in a common destruction—“That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked; and that the righteous be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” (Gen. xviii. 25.) Here was a fitting occasion for Jehovah to have informed the patriarch, (and through him the world,) that in his present dispensations he does not discriminate between persons of different characters, but treats all alike, deferring unto a future period the making of those distinc-

tions which justice seems to require. But no such information did Abraham obtain ; on the contrary, the justness of his remonstrance was practically acknowledged. God did not slay the righteous with the wicked, but saved Lot and his family, whilst he overthrew with a judgment of fire the wicked inhabitants of the cities of the plain. Nevertheless, we are informed by modern theologians, in the face of this, and of a hundred kindred scriptural facts, and the experience of all ages and of every day, that a suitable distinction is not here made betwixt the righteous and the wicked ; and therefore, that to satisfy the requirements of infinite justice, there must be a future dispensation for this special end. Such is the conclusion—you have seen, reader, that the premises are false, and, consequently, the conclusion is false also.

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## HELL PUNISHMENT EXAMINED.

Dr. Adam Clark, speaking of the English word hell, says, “ It is derived from the Anglo-Saxon *helan*, which signifies, *to cover, conceal, or hide*, and hence the tiling, or covering of a house, and the covering of books are to this day called *heling* ; and the phrase *to hell* is still used as synonymous with *to cover, or hide*, in several of the western counties of England. Thus the true and primitive meaning of the word hell, was perfectly accordant with the idea suggested by the Hebrew *sheol*, and the Greek *hades*, for, as nouns, all three of these words imply something *unseen, concealed, or invisible*, and have, therefore, with propriety been employed to convey the notion of an *unseen world, the grave, or the state of the dead in general*.” Thus far the great Arminian commentator.

The learned Archbishop Usher, has expressed the same opinion, as follows : “ We have no word in the French or English language to express the idea conveyed by the Hebrew *sheol*, or the Greek *hades*. Our English word hell had anciently this meaning, being derived from the German hell, *to hide*. Hence, the ancient Irish used to say ‘ *hell the head*,’ meaning *to cover the head*. So that our hell then answered to the Greek *hades*, which

signifies '*an unseen place.*'" To this agree, also, Dr. Campbell, of Aberdeen, and many others.

Not only in regard to the literal sense of the Old Testament word rendered hell, are learned commentators agreed, but also in regard to the fact, that the idea of punishment beyond death was not entertained by the Jewish people, nor inculcated in their sacred oracles : this must surely be admitted a highly important concession. Look at it, reader. The Jewish economy continued down to the four thousandth year of the world, and after. For all this period, then, no revelation had been made to man concerning a hell beyond the grave. And although Jehovah had established a church on earth, and revealed to that church his character and his laws ; although he addressed the human will by every motive likely to influence it ; yet, for four thousand years and more, no disclosure was made relative to a fact the most awful that finite mind can contemplate ; a fact (if true) which ought to have been traced in words of flame on every object in nature!!!

There was not in the Hebrew language a word denoting such a state or place as an ultra-mundane hell ; for although in our version of the Old Testament, we occasionally meet the word hell, yet it is derived from a term (*sheol*) which literally signifies *the separate state*. The Jews evidently supposed that all the dead go to the same place. Their usual phraseology in regard to a deceased person was, (whatever might have been his character,) "he was gathered to his fathers." Nor did this relate merely to the *body* of such individual, for we find it used in reference to those who were interred in foreign lands, as well as to such as were buried in the family cemetery with their progenitors.

That the term *sheol* suggested no idea to the mind of a Jew answering to the modern signification of the word hell, must be extremely apparent to every candid student of the Old Testament ; see for proof the following, among numerous similar instances of the application of this term.

When the patriarch Jacob supposed his son Joseph to be torn in pieces by a wild beast, he exclaimed, "I will go down unto [*sheol*] the grave unto my son, mourning." (Gen. xxxv. 37.) Job, in the midst of his troubles, supplicated his Maker as follows : "Oh, that thou wouldst hide me in [*sheol*] the grave, that thou wouldst keep me secret till thy wrath be past." (Job, xiii.



14.) David exclaims, on one occasion, "Oh Lord, thou hast brought up my soul from [*sheol*] the grave." (Ps. xxx. 3.) In another place the psalmist saith, "For thou wilt not leave my soul in [*sheol*] hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." (Ps. xvi. 10.) Peter represents him as having used this language in reference to Christ. (Acts xiii. 15.) "The Lord killeth, and maketh alive; he bringeth down to [*sheol*] the grave, and bringeth up." (1 Sam. ii. 6.)

"The grave [*sheol*] is my house." (Job.) This was no doubt said in allusion to the "long-home" of man—"the house appointed for all the living." Jonah cried unto the Lord "out of the belly of [*sheol*] hell." This was while he was in the belly of the fish; he viewed himself as already cut off from the living, and included among the inhabitants of the separate state, and therefore he says "the earth with her bars closed against me forever." Yet he lived after this to preach to the Ninevites.

"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in *sheol*, whither thou goest." (Eccl. ix. 10.) People cannot well be tormented in flames, without knowing something about it, but Solomon says, "there is no knowledge in *sheol*!" consequently, *sheol* cannot be a place of torment.

The king of Babylon was threatened with being "brought down to [*sheol*] hell, to the sides of the pit," and that while there, the kings of the earth should see him, and taunt him with his former boasted greatness, saying, "Is this the man that made the earth to tremble? (Isa. xiv. 15, 16.) Hell [*sheol*] is confounded with "the nether parts of the earth." (Ezek. xxi. 22.) In Amos ix. the Lord threatens to bring the sword upon the Jewish nation, and he says, "Though they dig into [*sheol*] hell, thence shall my hand take them."

These must fully suffice to show that *sheol*, in Old Testament times, was not supposed a receptacle of damned spirits. Jacob surely did not imagine that his beloved Joseph had gone to a world of misery—nor did he expect that his own gray hairs would sink in sorrow to such a place—neither did David allude to a realm of fire when he said his soul should not be left in hell—nor did Jonah mistake the whale's belly for such a realm—nor did Peter think that Christ's soul went, at death, to a hell of

modern description. No, no; no such spectre-peopled limbo as starts up in modern imaginations at the mention of that word, was ever associated with it in the minds of the inspired writers.

The same is on all hands, acknowledged true in regard to the Greek term *hades*; which, by the most eminent critics, is defined as signifying *an unseen state*; and is literally used to denote *the state of the dead in general*. This (even if we set aside the etymological evidence in the case,) is most satisfactorily proven by the fact, that the seventy Jews who translated the Hebrew scriptures into Greek, under Ptolemy Philadelphus, about 270 years before Christ, have employed *hades* as a corresponding word for *sheol*, and it so stands in their version, called the Septuagent, from which Christ and his apostles were in the habit of quoting. It is true, that of the eleven times it occurs in the New Testament, King James' translators have but once rendered it by the word *grave*; but it is exceedingly manifest that, in all its literal applications, *grave* or *the separate state*, would have better conveyed the sense of the original, than does the term hell.

Both *sheol* and *hades* are occasionally used in the scriptures in a figurative, or accommodated signification; between which and the primary idea, there is undoubtedly a close analogy. Previous to the introduction of christianity, the ideas of men respecting the future state were vague, dark, and uncertain; we must all remember that such were our own feelings, in our childhood, in relation to death and its consequences; an uneasiness—a terror of an indefinable nature, is the natural state of the mind in relation to that undisclosed realm beyond the grave, until the light and hopes of the gospel have calmed the fears of the spirit, and composed its flutterings. It is then not to be wondered at, that the Jews, to whom the state of the dead was equally undefined, should occasionally accommodate the terms *sheol*, and *hades*, to express *a condition of mental suffering and disquietude*, proceeding from whatever cause, more especially from remorse of conscience. Such is unquestionably the meaning of these words in their figurative application.

David says, "The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of [*sheol*] hell got hold of me. I found trouble and sorrow." (Ps. cxvi. 3.) Now all this occurred to him in this life; and intense as these hell-sufferings were, yet he survived them,

for he continues, "In my distress I cried unto God, he stooped from above, he took me, he drew me out of many waters." Let it be remembered, that although the general tenor of David's life was upright, yet there were instances in which he very greatly sinned. It was, therefore, meet that he should greatly suffer, which he did, as appears from the text just quoted, and the following truth was no doubt recorded from his own bitter experience.

"The wicked shall be turned into [*sheol*] hell, with all the nations that forget God." (Ps. ix. 17.) That is to say, moral darkness, degradation and misery shall be their infallible portion. There is such a thing as *rational*, as well as *personal* damnation. "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." (Prov. xiv. 34.) The nations of the plain were turned into *sheol* literally, i. e. into the invisible state. The Jewish nation was often turned into *sheol* morally, i. e. into the blind, abject, enslaved, unhappy state, to which forgetfulness of God invariably sinks an individual or nation. "Because of the transgression of a land, many are the princess thereof." (Prov. xxviii. 2.) How true is this? Wickedness disposes a people to be slaves, and they multiply their princes or oppressors accordingly. But free, and "happy is that people whose God is the Lord." (Ps. cxliv. 15.)

David had not only been in *sheol*, but the *lowest sheol*. Nevertheless, he survived to thank God for his deliverance. "Great is thy mercy towards me, for thou hast delivered my soul from the *lowest [sheol] hell*." (Ps. lxxxvi. 13.) His soul, prostrated under an overwhelming sense of guilt (probably on account of his cruel conduct in the case of Uriah) experienced a depth of moral wretchedness not to be described, save by the expressive phrase "*lowest sheol*." Now there cannot be a lower than the *lowest*, and the wise man, as well as the psalmist, testifies, that the state implied in this expression is experienced in this life. Speaking of the wicked woman, Solomon says, "her guests are in the depths of [*sheol*] hell." (Prov. ix. 18.) Yes! the deluded debauchee greatly mistakes his road to happiness, while he is rioting in brutal gratification; midnight gloom settles upon his soul, and, in regard to moral enjoyment, it resembles a waste and parched desert, without one verdant spot on which his hopes can

light for sustenance. There is still another instance of the use of this phrase. The reader may examine it, and determine whether it can be referred to a future life.

“For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest [*sheol*] hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains. I will heap mischiefs upon them; I will spend mine arrows upon them. I will also send the teeth of beasts upon them, with the poison of serpents of the dust. The sword without, and the terror within, shall destroy both the young man and the virgin, the suckling also, with the man of gray hairs.” (Deut. xxxii. 22—25.) I have quoted thus much, that the reader may the more readily perceive its inapplicability to the spiritual state. And yet it is not very uncommon for learned ministers to quote *certain detached parts* of it with such a reference! This text expresses what should be the fate of the Jewish nation when it should “forget God;” and such shall be the fate of all nations similarly guilty.

And now, reader, need more be added for your conviction concerning the meaning of the term *sheol*? If it properly refers to a place of ceaseless suffering, is it not surprising that it is not once used in the bible in express reference to such a place? Yet such is the fact—as must be acknowledged by every candid biblical student. Observe, *this is the only hell of which the world knew any thing authentically for 4000 years!* If there be any truth in the modern dogma concerning an infernal prison in a future world, is it not very remarkable that Jehovah did not disclose the momentous fact to his covenant people, amidst the many threatenings which he denounced against them in case they should relapse into idolatry? It really seems to me incredible, that a circumstance of such immense consequence should have been kept secret—seeing a truth of this nature is of such vast concern to mankind, and their utter ignorance respecting it for so many ages, is certainly no inconsiderable evidence that no such place exists.

The same remarks are applicable to *hades*; the most striking instance of its figurative application is in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. I have already noticed this at some length, and shown that it cannot be understood as belonging to a future world without gross impropriety; because the party represented therein as having gone to *hades*, (or rather as having been *buried*

*in hades*, as Dr. Clarke maintains is the literal rendering,) is spoken of, nevertheless, as still possessing all his bodily organs, and as subject to material influences; which proves that the parable does not relate to the world of spirits, but to the present life; and such also is most manifestly the case with all the Savior's parables.

The state literally referred to in these terms is doomed to final destruction. "I will ransom them from the power of [*sheol*] the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O [*sheol*] grave, I will be thy destruction!" (Hos. xiii. 14.) Paul plainly intimates the destruction of *hades* in his treatise on the resurrection; for this is then to be included in the universal overthrow of all the enemies to human purity and happiness: hence he exclaims, "O *hades*, where is thy victory!" (1 Cor. xv. 55.) It is also intimated in the 20th chapter of Revelation, under the figure of being "cast into the lake of fire." It were absurd to attach the idea of torment to the phrase *lake of fire* here, for *death and hades* cannot suffer torment; and since the tenor of inspiration is clear as to their final extinction, it is but rational to understand the passage under notice as containing an allegorical representation of that event.

Thus much for *sheol* and *hades*. Is it not surprising that these evident, these indisputable bible facts, require, at this late date, to be disclosed to the English reader? For what have men been studying divinity for eighteen centuries? For what have splendid colleges and churches been erected, and millions on millions of money been expended for the business of religious instruction? if, after all, mankind are kept in utter ignorance regarding bible truths of the most important character, and very nearly affecting their happiness and moral interests! "The wicked shall be turned into hell." From these words how oft has been inculcated the horrid dogma, that there is a vast furnace of fire beyond the confines of time, in which the deathless spirit shall be tormented for its present crimes after it leaves the body, for inconsumable ages! And shall such also be the fate of entire nations? for the above text includes in the same doom, "all the nations that forget God." Ah! the preacher finds it impolitic to shock the credulity of men, by portraying damnation on a scale of such magnitude as this; and he very prudently, therefore, leaves the latter clause of the text without an application. He is careful, also, not to inform his

hearers that David had himself been in this hell, as well as Jonah ; and that neither of these were under the necessity of dying in order to arrive thereat. We will now pass to the consideration of a different word.

*Gehenna.* This term refers literally to a valley near Jerusalem, where, formerly, Moloch or Baal was worshipped ; it was also called *Tophet*, and *the valley of Hinnom*. It used to be the scene of a most cruel species of idolatry, where children were made to pass alive through the fire to a grim deity. This odious worship was abolished (at least in this place) by Josiah, king of Judah. "And he defiled Topheth, which is in the valley of the children of Hinnom, that no man might make his son or his daughter to pass through the fire to Moloch." (2 Kings xxiii. 10.) In order to pollute the place more effectually, it was fixed on for the public execution of criminals, whose bodies were permitted to lie there unburied. Thither also was conveyed all manner of filth from the city, so that it became the most loathsome place conceivable. In later times it became necessary, in order to prevent a pestilence, to keep up a continual fire, for the purpose of consuming the putrid matter thus collected. To this fire, and to the worms which continually bred in this place, reference is had in the expression, "where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."

That the term *Gehenna* primarily refers to this valley, is universally admitted by the learned ; they pretend, to be sure, that it came to be used in later times with reference to the infernal regions ; which, indeed, is true enough ; for it is so understood, at present, by most Jews, and a majority of Christians. But, *how* late were the times when it came to be so used ? This question is one of some importance in this discussion ; was it so used in the days of Christ ? Oh, what strenuous efforts have been made to establish the affirmative of this question ! The proof chiefly relied on to this end, is that of certain Jewish talmudic writings ; but when the antiquity of these is inquired into impartially, it is found that they do not go back to the times of the Savior by several centuries, (that is, those targums which speak of *Gehenna* at all.) But suppose it were otherwise ; suppose that these rabbinical scholiæ could be traced back to the earliest date claimed for them, it would then seem singular enough that a hell should have been in existence for forty centuries without a name ;

and that no suitable designation was found for it until one was borrowed from a notoriously loathsome valley, adjoining the city of Jerusalem ! Does this seem probable ? Ninety-nine hundredths of mankind, for more than a hundred generations, had passed through a brief life of earthly misery, to a world of unceasing burnings ; and yet that world was without a name !

I confess there are a few texts, which to the common reader, with prejudices in its favor, appear, at first sight, to sanction this use of the word *Gehenna*. I therefore propose subjecting all the passages of this character to a candid investigation, begging the reader to bear in mind that this is a question in which the divine wisdom and goodness are deeply concerned, and that in consequence we ought to form our conclusions with the utmost caution, since in them is involved no less a decision than, *whether it shall be the fate of unconceived myriads of our race to endure the wrath of God through future endless ages.*

“ But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment ; and whosoever shall say to his brother, *Raca*, shall be in danger of the council ; but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell-fire.” (Matt. v. 22.) I cannot do better than to quote a commentary on this text from Alexander Campbell, who surely will not be suspected of wishing to refute the dogma which I am opposing, for he is at this time engaged in a strenuous effort to maintain it.

“ Thompson translates Matt. v. 22, thus : ‘ Whosoever is angry with his brother without cause, shall be liable to the sentence of the judges ; and whoever shall say to his brother, *Raca*, (a contemptuous word,) shall be liable to the sentence of the Sanhedrim ; and whoever shall say, *Morch*, (a reproachful word,) shall be liable (to be sentenced) to the vale of fire,’ or, *to the Gehenna of fire.*

“ In the common translation of this verse, there is a confounding of things present and future, of things human and divine, that badly comports with the wisdom and dignity of the speaker. What affinity exists between judges, a council, and hell-fire . Why should one expression of anger only subject a person to human judges, and another subject him to hell-fire, in the usual sense of these words ? Now, if the terms in this verse conveyed

the same meaning to us which they conveyed to the audience which the Savior at that time addressed, we would discover a propriety and beauty in them which is not manifest in the common translations of them. The fact is, that the allusions in this verse are all to human institutions, or customs among the Jews; and the judges, the Sanhedrim, and the hell-fire here introduced, are all human punishments. Parkhurst observes, on the phrase *Gehenna tou puros*, (a Gehenna of fire,) that, in its *outward* and *primary* sense, it relates to that dreadful doom of being burnt alive in the valley of Hinnom.

“The sentence of the *city councils*, which extended in certain instances, to *strangling* a person, is one of the allusions. These councils were composed of *twenty-three* judges, and were an inferior court amongst the Jews. The Sanhedrim, or council of *seventy-two* senators, whose sentence authorized *stoning* to death, and which was the superior court of that people, constitutes the second allusion. The burning a person alive in the vale of Hinnom, is the third. By these allusions he teaches his audience that anger in the heart, anger expressed in the way of contempt, and anger expressed with manifest malice, would, under his reign, subject them to such diversities of punishment, as they were wont to apportion to atrocious actions, according to their views of criminality.

“The following translation of this verse is expressive of the full sense of the original. ‘Whosoever is vainly incensed against his brother, shall be obnoxious to the sentence of the judges, (the court of twenty-three;) whoever shall say to his brother, (in the way of contempt,) *Shallow-brains*, shall be obnoxious to the Sanhedrim; and whosoever shall say, *Apostate wretch*, (the highest expression of malice,) shall be obnoxious to the Gehenna of fire,’ or to being burned alive in the vale of Hinnom. This translation is in substance approved by Adam Clarke, and other critics of respectability.”

“And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if



thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell-fire; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." (Mark ix. 43—48.) *Life*, in this passage, signifies gospel faith and enjoyment; "he that hath the Son hath life;" it cannot mean a future life of bliss, for persons do not pass to a state of heavenly felicity, with their bodies maimed and mutilated. Nothing can be more ridiculous than the referring such texts to a future world! Do the wicked go to hell whole and sound in health and limb, whilst the righteous go to heaven in a crippled state? I suppose that Gehenna, in this passage, is accommodated to express whatever of evil and misery were incurred by a rejection of the Savior. In my remarks on the 25th chapter of Matthew, I alluded to the nature of these sufferings.

Be it borne in mind, that this was a place of most disgusting notoriety throughout Judea, and had been for many centuries. The Jews were as familiar with its name as we are with the term *penitentiary*; and the word Gehenna was as certainly associated in their minds with the idea of the loathsome valley of Hinnom, as the term penitentiary is in ours with that of a place of penal confinement. Now this being the case, as the learned will admit, do you think it probable, reader, that Christ would use this word with reference to the invisible state, without apprising his hearers, in express terms, that he did so use it, and not according to its common signification? Suppose a preacher, in our day, were to threaten his hearers with a severe punishment in the penitentiary in case of impenitence, would they be likely to understand him as referring to an endless hell? Yet there is actually as much of a relation to eternity in this threatening as in that of being punished in *Gehenna*.

Perhaps we shall better understand the meaning of Christ's allusion to *Gehenna*, when addressing the rejecters of his gospel, if we attentively consider the following passage. "And they have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; which I commanded them not, neither came it into my heart. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be called 'Tophet, nor 'The valley of the son of Hinnom, but The valley of Slaughter: for they shall bury in Tophet, till there be

no place. And the carcasses of this people shall be meat for the fowls of the heaven, and for the beasts of the earth ; and none shall fray them away. Then will I cause to cease from the cities of Judah, and from the streets of Jerusalem, the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride ; for the land shall be desolate." (Jer. vii. 31—34.) This prediction had not yet received its accomplishment, but its fulfilment was nigh at hand ; it was fearfully impending. Christ told the Pharisees, " These be the days of vengeance, in which all things written in the prophets shall be fulfilled ;" and that the blood of the martyrs shed in past ages, should be visited on that generation ; hence he asks them, " How can ye escape the damnation of *Gehenna* ?" (Matt. xxiii. 33.) It is manifest, from the nature of this prediction, that it looked forward to the great national judgment on the Jewish people, when they were driven from their country, and cut off from all their former distinguished privileges. Josephus informs us that nearly half a million of them were slaughtered in Jerusalem alone, and that their carcasses were cast out into *Gehenna*, or the valley of Hinnom.

But some people think that the phrase " shall not be quenched," must refer to something absolutely eternal, " for, if not quenched (say they) it must burn unceasingly." This does not necessarily follow, however ; a fire cannot be said to be quenched which expires of itself, for want of combustible matter to support it ; and we have reason to believe that this was the case with the fire of *Gehenna*, for Isaiah has explicitly recorded that such was Jehovah's determination. " And it shall come to pass, that from one *new moon* to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord. And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me : for their worm shall not *die*, neither shall their fire be quenched ; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh." (Isa. lxvi. 23, 24.) Sabbaths, new moons, flesh, and carcasses, have no relation to *eternity*. This text must therefore refer to a circumstance of *time*. The same, no doubt, to which Christ alludes, viz : The unquenched fire and ever-breeding worms of the valley of Hinnom. The phrase " shall not be quenched," occurs in several other places in the scripture, in such connexion as leaves no room for doubt as to the limited duration of the judgment it ex-

presses. "Then will I kindle a fire in the *gates* thereof, and it shall devour the *palaces* of Jerusalem, and it *shall not be quenched*." (Jer. xvii. 27.) "Behold, mine anger and my fury shall be poured out upon this place, upon man, and upon *beast*, and upon the *trees* of the field, and upon the *fruit* of the ground, and it shall burn, and *shall not be quenched*." (Jer. vii. 20.) It is hoped that those who contend for ceaseless suffering on the strength of this expression, will not include among the subjects of that suffering, *gates, palaces, beasts, trees, and fruits of the ground!* They should at least limit their tender mercies to the subjects of sensation! See to the same effect, Ezek. xx. 47, 48. "And say to the forest of the south, Hear the word of the Lord: Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will kindle a fire in thee, and it shall devour every green tree in thee, and every dry tree: the flaming flame *shall not be quenched*, and all faces from the south to the north shall be burned therein. And all flesh shall see that I the Lord have kindled it: it *shall not be quenched*." In the following passage concerning the destruction of Idumea, this phrase occurs in a form much stronger than in Mark. "And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. It *shall not be quenched* night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up for ever: from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever." (Isa. xxxiv. 9, 10.) It will be apparent to the candid reader, from these passages, that the phrase *shall not be quenched*, in its scriptural applications, is not to be understood as implying that the fire is to burn to eternity, nor even that it is expressive of suffering beyond the present life. The Jews were so accustomed to these expressions in their sacred writings, where they invariably refer to circumstances of time, that they were in no danger of being misled with regard to their meaning as employed by the Savior.

When Christ sent his disciples out to preach, he gave them the following caution: "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." (Matt. x. 28.) "And I say unto you, my friends, be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that, have no more that they can do: but I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear; fear him, which after he hath killed,

hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, fear him." (Luke xii. 4, 5.)

It is usually supposed that *Gehenna* must here imply a hell beyond the grave, because the destruction of the soul, as well as the body, is threatened. But there are two facts in the way of this position; the first is, that the word (*psuche*) rendered *soul* in this place, more properly signifies the *animal life*, and is so rendered in numerous instances. This criticism, the correctness of which will not be disputed, removes the ground of the supposition at once. The second fact is, that the *body*, which those whom they were told not to fear had the power to *kill*, is not liable to destruction in a hell beyond the grave, but returns to the dust of the earth from whence it originated. How then can *Gehenna*, in this instance, imply a place of torment in a future state? It cannot. We must, therefore, seek a more consistent explanation of this passage than that which is usually given.

Some think that the allusion here is to the Roman authority, personified, which had power, after killing the body, to deny it burial, and cast it into *Gehenna*; or to destroy the life and the body together in *Gehenna*, by burning alive, which was a mode of punishment practiced in that day on the highest class of offenders. If such was indeed the Savior's allusion, the following paraphrase may well convey the sense of the passage. "I say unto you, my disciples, (for they are the party addressed,) that so long as you are faithful to the objects of the mission on which I now send you, you have nothing to fear from your persecutors, for not a hair of your heads shall perish unpermitted of your Father in heaven. Entertain no fears, therefore, in regard to them: at the most, they can but kill the body. You will in that case die a martyred and honored death; but even this shall not befall you, except by your heavenly Father's permission for your good. Beware, however, that you run not into unlawful excesses; presume not on the divine protection, if you should wantonly transgress the laws of the land, but apprehend the fearful award of the civil magistrate, who, after killing the body, has power to cast it into *Gehenna*, or (by dooming you to be burnt alive) to destroy the life and body together, in that loathsome place." Peter uses a caution of similar import, to those whom he addresses in his epistles. "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial

which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you : but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings ; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye ; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you : on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil-doer, or as a busy-body in other men's matters. Yet if any man suffer as a christian, let him not be ashamed ; but let him glorify God on this behalf." (1. Peter iv. 12—16.) Others again think that Jehovah is alluded to as the object to be feared, not on the ground of his ability to destroy in a hell beyond the grave, (for *Gehenna*, in that day, was not received in any such sense,) but in reference to his power to involve them in a common destruction with that portion of their countrymen who should obstinately reject the gospel. To me this seems the most probable construction of the text ; for *Gehenna* was associated in the minds of Jews with every thing horrid, loathsome, and abominable. Christ tells the Pharisees that they made their converts "two-fold more the children of *Gehenna* than themselves ;" and James, speaking of the tongue, says, "it is set on fire of *Gehenna*." Should we be at a loss to understand a person who should say, that the converts made to such and such principles were made the *children of the penitentiary* ? The meaning, I think, would be sufficiently obvious to us ; we should understand it to imply, that they had become fitted, by the evil principles they had imbibed, for such practices as might subject them to the penitentiary. Well, then, as before observed, *Gehenna* was a place of as great and of as odious notoriety, in that day, as is the prison, or penitentiary in ours ; for the former was not only a receptacle for the unburied carcasses of criminals, and the filth and offals from the vast and over-populated city of Jerusalem, but it was also a place of criminal execution. The Jews, it is well known, held themselves polluted if they came in contact with a dead body, and it may well be conceived, therefore, what a horror they entertained in regard to so nauseous and loathsome a place as by all accounts the valley of Hinnom was.

It is worthy of remark, that neither Christ nor his apostles ever used the word *Gehenna* except when addressing Jews : to Gentiles the reference would have been unintelligible. Paul,

who calls himself "the apostle to the Gentiles," never once used it, nor any other term answering to the modern idea of hell. It is somewhat singular—nay, it is very remarkable, that while all other nations had their respective hells, the Jews, who were especially instructed in religion by Jehovah, for the space of 2000 years, were without any ideas on the subject! Should not this fact alone suffice to prove, that the doctrine of a region of suffering beyond death is fabulous?—that it is of heathen origin? and that it has no true and proper connexion with a religion revealed from heaven?

It is probable that the idea of a hell was first taken from those gloomy dungeons, which earthly tyrants have, in all ages and countries, employed as the instruments of their ambition or revenge; hence, with the idea of hell are usually associated the dismal and heart-sickening imagery belonging to such places as the Bastile of France, the Black-hole of Calcutta, and the Inquisition of Spain or Goa; dungeons, chains, racks, torturing implements, darkness, feverish thirst, groans, shrieks, blasphemies, burning, suffocation, desperation, despair, all these start up in connection with that direful word, which has given to priests their magic power over the souls of men, and which has caused man to start back with horror from the contemplation of that futurity which has been opened to him in the gospel as an object of joyful hope.

In this branch of our general subject it is a high satisfaction to us, that we have the judgments of all, of all sects, both Jew and christian, in perfect coincidence relative to the radical and primary meaning of *Gehenna*; all agree that it comes from the two Hebrew words *Gia* and *Hinnom*, literally signifying *the valley of Hinnom*. On this point there is no dispute. It is assumed, indeed, that it came by accommodation to be applied to a hell beyond this life; but it surely ought not to be expected that an assumption of such magnitude will be admitted without the most substantial evidence; and none such, so far as I can learn, has ever been produced, nor do I believe it can be.

Critics are also agreed, as before observed, relative to *sheol* and *hades*, and even our English *hell*. These things must be kept in mind by the reader, for they are of great moment in their bearing upon the settlement of the great question before us, relative to the truth or falsity of universalism.

The celebrated Dr. John Mason Good, in his lecture on the nature and duration of the soul, affirms, respecting the popular tradition, as early as the time of Isaiah, (and Homer, with whom he believes him to have been contemporary,) that "it taught that the disembodied spirit becomes a ghost as soon as it is separated from the material frame: a thin, misty, aerial form, somewhat larger than life; with a feeble voice, shadowy limbs, knowledge superior to what was possessed while in the flesh; capable, under particular circumstances, of rendering itself visible, and retaining so much of its former features, as to be recognised in its apparition; in a few instances wandering about for a time after death, but for the most part conveyed to *a common receptacle situated in the centre of the earth, denominated SHEOL, HADES, HELL, or the world of spirits.*

"Such was the general belief of the multitude, in almost all countries, from a very early period of time, with the difference, that the *hades* of various nations was supposed to exist in some remote place on the surface of the earth, and that of others in the clouds."

It is more than probable that this dim and misty outline of the realm of ghosts was from age to age amplified upon, until it became the abode of the damned, modified amongst different nations according to the diversified policy of their priests, or fancy of their poets: by some it has been located in the interior of the earth; by some on its surface in some remote district; by some in the clouds, in the moon, in a comet, or one of the planets. With some it has been held a hell of fire; with others a hell of ice; with others, of alternate burning and freezing; with others, of darkness and dreary wandering amid every frightful circumstance, of hunger and thirst, etc. The latest refinement upon it amongst christians is, that it has no outward or material existence, but is merely *a state* of moral suffering, remorse, unavailing anguish, and despair.

If hell be a *located place*, God made it. He made it with a perfect knowledge of the end to which it should answer, and he of course adapted it to that end. He also created those whose doom it shall be to groan in its depths forever; and he of course knew that such should be the issue of their being. And he is infinitely benevolent, nevertheless! He "is good to all, and his tender

mercies are over all his works !!" Let those believe these absurdities who can. *I can not*, if the penalty be a hundred fold damnation !!!

Thanks be to God ! I lie under no such obligation ! The light of his word shines sufficiently bright on the pathway of my inquiries on these subjects, to satisfy my understanding and my hopes. It informs me, that "in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," but no mention is made of his having created a HELL !! So, also, at the conclusion, it speaks of "a new heaven, and a new earth," but nothing whatever of a NEW HELL !! Thus, neither firstly, nor lastly, nor intermediately, do the scriptures recognise such a hell, as at this day is proving, to a frightful extent, a source of terror, and madness, and suicide.

It is sincerely hoped that the reader will "search the scriptures," in order to satisfy himself on this point. He will receive but little edification from the perusal of polemical squabbles concerning it. He must "to the law, and to the testimony ;" and oh ! let him take heed, that nothing short of these high authorities determine him in a belief, so dreadful in its bearings on his own happiness, and so pernicious in its influence on his views of the Divine character.

## FOREKNOWLEDGE AND FOREORDINATION.

### DOES ABSOLUTE FOREKNOWLEDGE NECESSARILY IMPLY ABSOLUTE FOREORDINATION ?

So momentous are the consequences involved in this question, that very many have been deterred from adventuring fairly and boldly into a discussion of it ; for if, on the one hand, it be settled in the affirmative, it seems clearly to follow that God is the author of sin—that man is without moral freedom—that he therefore is not responsible for his actions—and, in that case, promises, threatenings, rewards, punishments, appeals to his interests, his fears, his sense of propriety, &c., are unmeaning mockeries. It seems



to follow, moreover, that God has incorporated a lie in man's moral constitution ; for man has an ineradicable persuasion that he is free—that not his actions only, but his volitions also, are entirely subject to his own control ; which, however, is not the case, if all events are the result of divine foreordination. Such are the difficulties on the one side. Milton has alluded to them with much beauty and force in his *Paradise Lost*, as follows :

“ Ingrate, he had of me  
All he could have ; I made him just and right,  
Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.  
Such I created all th' ethereal powers  
And spirits, both them who stood and them who fail'd ;  
Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.  
Not free, what proof could they have given sincere  
Of true allegiance, constant faith or love,  
Where only what they needs must do appeared,  
Not what they would ? what praise could they receive ?  
What pleasure I from such obedience paid,  
When will and reason (reason also is choice)  
Useless and vain, of freedom both despoil'd,  
Made passive both, had served necessity,  
Not me ? ”

On the other hand, if the question at the head of this article be settled in the negative, it would seem to follow that, in a great measure, things are left to the determination of chance—that Jehovah himself may be disappointed in the final issue of affairs—that he is indifferent to the eternal interests of his creatures, or he would not have suspended them upon uncertain contingencies—that in innumerable instances the will of man will prevail against the divine will—that, in fact, God can have had no definite purpose in creating, save such as he adopted on the foresight of what man would do ; and thus, the doings of the Infinite are shaped and controlled by the ever-changing vagaries of finite beings ; and, moreover, the deity is, in truth, as directly accountable for all the events which take place upon the ground of absolute foreknowledge, as upon that of absolute foredetermination.

These difficulties on both sides have induced some to seek a middle position ; none, however, have yet succeeded in the search—there is no sailing betwixt Scylla and Charybdis here. Dr. Clarke (as stated in another part of this work) assumes, that God can be ignorant, if he tries, of such events as he chooses not to know. A most gross solecism, this ; it implies that the Infinite

Being, if he please, can dispense with his attribute of omniscience! And if with one attribute, why not with all, and so cease to be God? John Wesley, and others after him, have sought to evade the question by perplexing it. "With the Omniscient Being," say they, "there is no *before*, no *after*—all is *present*—the past and the future are one eternal *now*." This is a mere sophism, however; for, after all, the knowledge which *precedes* the events to which it relates is *fore-knowledge*; that which is *subsequent* to them is *after-knowledge*; all the divine knowledge of events is necessarily antecedent to them, and we therefore say, that he *fore-knows* all things; in so saying we conform to the established usages of human speech, and say what none directly question. Why, then, do they seek to mystify the subject, save that it be for the sake of a subterfuge from the force of truth?

Were I an Arminian, I would not hesitate to take the ground, that God *does* not, and *can* not, foresee future events; for if they are contingent, if they are shaped by the accidental determinations of the human will, then are there no links connecting them with the past—no clue reaching back to the origin of things, by which their succession can be traced; and even to Omniscience itself, (it seems to me,) it were impossible to foresee the future, except by a concatenated series of causes and effects it were connected with the past. There are things which, in their own nature, are impossible; error, for instance, cannot be made superior to truth, nor vice to virtue; nor can a part be made to equal the whole, nor the whole to exceed the sum of all its parts; and, to my thinking, it is equally impossible to see an end from a beginning with which it has no necessary connexion.

Maugre, then, all the subtle sophistry to the contrary, we cannot avoid the conclusion, that absolute foreknowledge *does* imply absolute foreordination; just as certainly as there is a connexion between causes and their *immediate* effects, so are these effects connected with consequences *more remote*; and, like the paths in a labyrinth, which, however mazy and numerous, are found, when retraced, to issue in the single path with which they begun: so the millions of events which form the intricate web of human life, are seen by the eye of Omniscience to be but natural ramifications from causes which originated in his own appointment. Take different ground, if you will, reader, but where will you

find it to end ? In a metaphysical morass, where not an inch of firm footing will be found.

For example, an individual commits a wicked act; this had *a cause*; whether a reasonable cause or not, or whether he could have acted otherwise or not, is not now the question; *it had a cause*. What was it ? Say, if you please, "his depraved nature." Very well, and had not his depraved nature also *a cause*? "Yes," say you, "it was transmitted to him from our first parents, and was an effect of their first offence." Well, and had not the first offence *a cause* too? "Oh yes," you reply, "they listened, and yielded to the wiles of the serpent." And pray what was the *cause* of their so listening and yielding? Here you are, reader, in the swamp of which I forewarned you, from which, however lustily you may flounder, you cannot extricate yourself. Nevertheless, (as you are *a free agent*) you may try. Say, then, that "our first parents could have resisted the temptation if they had chosen." But from what *cause* came it that they did not choose? "Well," say you, "I can only answer, that their appetite for the forbidden fruit was so strong, as to overcome their resisting powers." One question more, then, if you please. Who created their appetite, and made it so strong as to overcome their resisting powers? This will admit of but one answer; and since, on the boundless map of the future, the Omniscient eye could clearly trace from these primary causes, all the multiform results which should ramify to eternity, is it unreasonable or impious to say, that he ordained those results.

"All very good!" exclaims the reader; "and so, as sin is of God's appointment, I shall go on and commit as much of it as possible—I shall thereby be merely fulfilling the divine purposes." Reader! reflect a moment!—Now tell me if there is not more of rashness than of reason in what you say. You "will be merely fulfilling the divine purposes!" How know you what the divine purposes respecting you are? If he has ordained that some shall come to their death by poisoning, will you thence conclude that such is to be your case, and so swallow a fatal drug? or because some are to die by burning, will you conceive it your duty to throw yourself into the fire? No, no, you will act more prudently in this case—you will hope that an easier fate awaits you, and you will patiently abide it. Very well; hope also that to you is al-

lotted a life of virtue and happiness : it is at least both your duty and interest to act on this persuasion, and nothing can be lost by endeavors toward such a life.

In sooth, this is one of that knotty class of questions, on which it is much easier to raise difficulties than to obviate them. I greatly mistake the entire scope of the epistle to the Romans, if Paul himself had not some experience to this effect ; he seems to have clearly taken the ground, that God not only foresees, but also fore-appoints all events : he then saw it to follow, that sin itself must be included amongst the all things so appointed ; and, therefore, that sin must, in some sense, be according to the divine will—if not *as an ultimate end*, (as it certainly is not,) yet *as an intermediate means* ; and he anticipates an objection arising on this very ground. “Thou wilt say then unto me, why doth he yet find fault ? for who hath resisted his will ?” (Rom. ix. 19.) To meet such cavils was no difficult matter with one of the apostle’s dexterity as a reasoner ; he could show how Jehovah can effect good results by means which we should think the least likely to yield them. It is true, that of even this disposition of the subject, advantage would be taken by the captious disputant. “Why,” he would ask, “since God effects, by the agency of actions which we term sinful, such signally glorious results, may not man plead the like excuse for his wicked actions, pretending that he meant them as means to a good end ?” Indeed, Paul and his fellow apostles, were actually charged with teaching the very principle involved in this question—“Let us do evil that good may come.” (Rom. iii. 8.) And the same has been reiterated against the same doctrine by superficial thinkers in every age, for little do such superficial objectors consider, that it is not their province to foretell how each particular action shall come out ; their experience ought to instruct them that they are often disappointed in the result of events of the least complex character ; those from which they predict the best issues very commonly yield (so far as they are concerned) the worst, and vice versa. Nevertheless, unintimidated by the cavils and perversions to which this truth was liable from men of superficial or perverse minds, the apostle pushes on his argument with great vigor, showing that the divine Being, in carrying forward his stupendous schemes, exercises not only a general, but a particular direction : every thing is taken up into

his plan, and made a means of pushing it forward toward the appointed consummation: some he raises up to eminence in the world, some he casts down; some he enlightens, some he abandons to blindness; some he calls to the enjoyment of high religious privileges, and some he gives over to hardness of heart and reprobacy of mind. "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour." (Rom. ix. 21.) And most gloriously does this whole argument end. Love is shown to be the foundation of the whole scheme of divine government; in all of its infinitely diversified manifestations, grace is interwoven throughout the texture: grace indeed is the warp and the woof; *of* God are all things; *through* God are all things; *to* God are all things. Such (in Rom. xi.) is the apostle's final and satisfactory disposition of this perplexing and much mooted question.

"Grace all the work shall crown  
Through everlasting days,  
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,  
And well deserves the praise."

Between Calvinism and Arminianism (so far as respects their connection with this question) there is not a hair's breadth of rational difference; the former indeed *seems* to be the more harsh of the two, but the more consistent in itself, in reality, however, they are the same; Calvinism *is* Arminianism, asserted in honest directness of terms; Arminianism *is* Calvinism, expressed by circumlocution. In verbal modification, however, these isms differ. Calvinists acknowledge the conclusion, that God has fore-appointed all things, to be inevitable from the fact that he foreknew all things; Arminians affect to think differently, and affirm, that Jehovah may design an event to be, when he knows it never will be; and not to be, at the same time that he knows it certainly will! hence, although he created us with the certain knowledge, that with regard to a large majority, the act would prove infinitely disastrous, yet he is not answerable for the result, because he meant it should happen otherwise! Most sage and consistent Arminianism!

Doctor Drugg had been heard to say, that of the two medicines he had left in his patient's room—the one sanative, and the other fatal in its qualities—he knew that the sick man would choose the

latter, and that his death would be the consequence. When put upon his trial for murder, on this ground, the Doctor plead as follows: "May it please the honorable court, there is as wide a difference between the foreknowing, and the foredetermining of a thing, as between the occipital and metatarsal extremities of the human subject, and therefore, though I knew my poor patient would come to his death by means of the nostrums left in his chamber, yet I beg your honors to believe that such was not my intention—I positively designed his cure." Unfortunately for Doctor Drugg, the court determined the case on common-sense principles, rather than on those of Arminianism; they could not comprehend how he could possibly purpose to cure his patient by means which he positively knew would kill him! Stupid fellows! had they but been Arminians, they could have found a parallel for the case in the conduct which their creed ascribes to the deity, and thus the poor Doctor would have been longer spared to the cause of science.

"So! then," exclaims the Arminian objector, "the author really seems bent on proving, that as Jehovah foreknew of the existence of sin, he must also have designed it!" Yes, such is really my purpose, and this I mean to do upon your own admitted principles; you have been accustomed to casting the supposed odium of this conclusion upon Calvinism, and I am now showing that it equally pertains to your own system. Calvinism, it is true, comes to it by a *direct* path, whilst you, more cautious, approach it by a *circuit*. For example, you hold that God made certain angels, with the ability to become devils if they chose; he knew they would so choose; he knew that he should banish them to hell; he knew that if he should allow them they would escape from hell to this earth, and tempt from their allegiance to himself the race of beings called man: he did so allow them; he knew that for as long as time should last, age after age should roll its successive millions of this race into the infernal abyss; he knew when he created hell that such should be its uses; and when he created these ill-fated beings, he knew that they were to people its fiery caverns—all these things were as plain before his eyes as though they were then present facts; he could have prevented them if he pleased, but did not please! It unanswerably follows, then, that he designed them. Calvinism admits this at once. Where is the difference, then? Just here; your system

alters neither the length nor the direction of the chain of fate ; it but makes it to consist of a greater number of links.

Having, then, as I think, established the conclusion, that absolute foreknowledge implies absolute foreordination, I proceed to notice the objections which seem to lie against it. 'I have already considered the most formidable of these, viz., that it makes God the author of sin ; and I now ask how, on *any* ground, is this to be avoided ? I assert, moreover, that it is plainly scriptural. Shall we affect to be more scrupulous in this respect than were the inspired penmen ? We are told in sacred story, that God put certain dreams into the mind of Joseph, the interpretation of which was, that he should come to be a man of so great dignity that his father and brethren should be brought to reverence him. What means did Jehovah employ to bring this end about ? Can it be denied, that among those means were several guilty transactions ? Such, for instance, were the envy of the brethren, their selling him for a slave, and the incontinence of Potiphar's wife. Will any pretend that God did not appoint these events ? If he did not, then he provided *other* means for accomplishing the end, or *no means at all* ; if *other* means, they were not brought into use ! and God knew they would not when he appointed them ! If he provided *no means at all*, what must we think of his wisdom, in appointing *ends*, without the requisite *means* for bringing them about ? Of but one method of evasion know I from the force of this case. The Arminian may say, that in the dreams of Joseph, God only intimated what he *foresaw would* come—not what he *designed should* come ; and that God merely *overruled* these sinful transactions for good, but did not *appoint* them as a means to that good. Ah ! this plea will not do. Let us see of what the good consisted : 1st, the deliverance of the chosen people from the famine : 2nd, nor from the famine of Canaan merely, but also from its idolatries, to which, as they increased, they would have been much exposed : 3rd, their establishment by themselves in Goshen, (a rich pasturage country,) where they multiplied to a numerous nation : 4th, the raising from them a line of prophets, reaching down in unbroken succession to the rise of the prophet of prophets, Christ Messiah, through whom a more glorious kingdom should be established, as wide in its sway as the extension of being, and as lasting as the age of the Most High. And will you say, my

dear reader, that these stupendous occurrences were not previously marked out by Jehovah, and every link in the well-arranged series of means by which they were brought about, appointed and adjusted by him? Was the effecting of these great ends left to the agency of accident? So at least, thought not Joseph; for when, after his father's death, his brethren came to him to implore his forgiveness for their evil conduct toward him, he said unto them, "Fear not; for am I in the place of God? But as for you, ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive." (Gen. l. 19, 20.) Thus is God directly recognised by Joseph as the prime agent in this business; but his was a different motive from their's, who were the subordinate agents or instruments. Take another example. Jehovah appointed his Son to die for the world's redemption; he meant, of course, that this important event should be effected in a certain definite way. What was that way? The Savior was to be denied by one of his disciples; betrayed by another; forsaken by all; rejected by his own nation; scourged, and in death confounded with malefactors. All these things are said by Jesus himself to have been previously marked out by the purposes of heaven; and the inspired recorders of these transactions make no scruple of referring them to the same source. (Matt. xxvii. 35. John xii. 38; xv. 25; xvii. 12; xviii. 32; xix. 24, 36.) After Christ's death, the apostles set forth the same fact in their preaching. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." (Acts ii. 23.) The following is to the same effect. "And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. But those things, which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled." (Acts iii. 17, 18.) Even in solemn prayer together they recognise these events as the result of the divine purpose. "For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." (Acts iv. 27, 28.) I cannot conceive how any rational man can dream, that God, having for ends of unspeakable glory and benevolence appointed his Son's death, took no express mea-



tures for the accomplishment of that event, but left it to be brought about by mere chance ! Yet have I heard even preachers prate to that effect from the pulpit ! I have even heard them affirm that the death of Christ was no necessary part of the divine plan ! Let such wise heads turn to Heb. ix. 8. Col. i. 19, 20, and compare notes with the great apostle upon this point.

Equally unphilosophical as unscriptural is the denial, that all things, in the broadest acceptation of the phrase, have their origin in the unchangeable designs of heaven ; it is, in effect, to dethrone the deity, and to put the sceptre of the universe into the hands of finite creatures, whose wills may shape its occurrences to suit themselves. The pious worthies in bible times were better philosophers. Job ascribed his calamities directly to Jehovah. "The Lord gave, and *the Lord hath taken away.*" (Job i. 21.) "Shall we receive good at the hand of the Lord, and shall we not receive *evil?*" (Job ii. 10.) Yet in bringing these evils to pass, God employed the agency of Sabine and Chaldean freebooters, as well as winds, and fire, and disease. (These agencies are, in the bible, personified under the name of Satan ; ) the scheme, you perceive, involved the sins of robbery and murder ! Jeremiah accounts God the author of the public calamities which he bewails in his Lamentations. "The Lord hath cast off his altar ; he hath abhorred his sanctuary : he hath given up into the hand of the enemy the walls of her palaces ; they have made a noise in the house of the Lord, as in the day of a solemn feast. The Lord hath purposed to destroy the wall of the daughter of Zion : he hath stretched out a line, he hath not withdrawn his hand from destroying : therefore he made the rampart and the wall to lament ; they languished together. Her gates are sunk into the ground ; he hath destroyed and broken her bars : her king and her princes are among the Gentiles : the law is no more ; her prophets also find no vision from the Lord." (Lam. ii. 7—9.) The same prophet asks, "Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not ?" (Ibid. iii. 37.) Now in this visitation upon Jerusalem, Jehovah employed the ambition, the lust of fame and spoil, of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon ; the earthly monarch's purposes were those which his own lusts suggested—God's were those of retribution upon a sinful people. Let me here ask—do we not account Napoleon to have been a scourge of Providence

to the despotic and corrupt nations of Europe? And if God *meant* that our nation should become free when it did, was not his hand concerned in the oppressions, exactions, evil counsels in the British cabinet, etc., which directly tended to bring on the great event? If any suppose these questions to be impious, I beg they will peruse 2 Chron. xviii. 18—22, and Exod. x. 1, 2. I cannot think that signal occurrences, of the nature here alluded to, take place *accidentally*; and if we allow that they take place *providentially*, then consistency demands the admission that, in appointing the ends, providence also appoints the means by which those ends are effected.

“But this reasoning proves,” you will say, “that we are destitute of moral freedom; whereas this is contradicted by our experience, for we can all do what we please, within the compass of our ability.” Granted; but can you *please* as you please? You are pleased with beauty—can you, if you try, be equally pleased with deformity? You are pleased with musical harmonies—can you, by trying, be equally pleased with discords? You are pleased with savoury viands—can you, by any effort, become equally so with such as are nauseous? If not, then where, I pray you, is your boasted freedom of choice? Your will is influenced by motives, and, for the life of you, you cannot yield to a *weaker* motive in one direction, when a *stronger* one is acting upon you in another; you cannot prefer pain before pleasure, nor sickness before health. By an error in judgment you may indeed *mistake* the weaker for the stronger motive—every sinner does so when he prefers a present and momentary gratification, such as vice may yield, before a virtuous self-denial, which would secure to him a purer and more permanent enjoyment. You must see, reader, that the notion of free-will is a chimera. Is it because you *choose*, that you love your friends better than your enemies? or your own children better than those of a stranger? Suppose, then, that you try to choose otherwise—ha! can you make it out? Why, thou art a most puissant free agent, indeed!

There is infinite skill displayed in the divine plan of dealing with man; while man is acting to please himself, and is under the impression that he directs his own volitions as well as actions, God is, in fact, by his weak and purblind instrumentality, working out his own vast purposes—making even his impotent wrath to

praise him ; controlling, over-ruling to finally glorious ends, all his infinitely diversified schemes and doings. To Nebuchadnezzar, the proud monarch of Babylon, was afforded an experimental proof of this. "The king spake and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty ? While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken ; the kingdom is departed from thee : and they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field : they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.—And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth forever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation : and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing : and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth : and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what dost thou ?" (Dan. iv. 30—32, 34, 35.) When Senecharib, king of Assyria, marched back his army without fulfilling his contemplated invasion of Jerusalem, he supposed he was merely fulfilling his own sovereign pleasure ; but see how God speaketh in regard to him. "Therefore will I put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest." (Isa. xxxvii. 29.) Indeed, whoever wishes to maintain a firm faith in the doctrine of free agency, would do well to avoid a study of the scriptures, for they afford it small countenance indeed. "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." (Prov. xvi. 1.) "There are many devices in a man's heart ; nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand." (Ib. xix. 21.) "Man's goings are of the Lord ; how can a man then understand his own way ?" (Ib. xx. 24.) "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water : he turneth it whithersoever he will." (Ib. xxi. 1.) "The lot is cast into the lap ; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." (Ib. xvi. 33.)

Has the language of these texts any meaning? And is it of any authority in this question?

I will now show you, sir Arminian, that in your notion of free agency you are inconsistent with yourself; your practice is in contradiction with your theory. Why, if our hereafter condition depend on our volitions, do you supplicate the deity to interfere therewith? Why ask him to convert this individual, or that, if, after all, the individual must convert himself? Why should we look to God for salvation, when the matter depends on ourselves? And what meant Paul when he said, himself might plant and Apollos water, but God must give the increase? You try to make out, I know, that our salvation is a sort of partnership concern between God and ourselves—we must do a part, and God will do the rest. But then, (as you confess,) we cannot do our part until God does his; and there are millions in regard to whom his part is not done at all, (or if at all, *ineffectually*, which is the same thing.) You therefore are inconsistent when you connect our salvation with our supposed free agency, because by your own admission we have so such agency! You do not admit this unequivocally, I grant, but you certainly do in such terms as clearly imply it. See the following quotation from the Methodist discipline, (which is but a transcript from the Episcopalian book of Common Prayer, and expresses the doctrine of both those denominations on this head.)

“ART. VIII.—*Of Free Will*.—The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself by his own natural strength and works to faith, and calling upon God; Wherefore we have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us, when we have that good will.”

I do not quote your written creed for the sake of refuting it, for I believe it in accordance with the bible and with fact: I quote it to show your inconsistency with it; for most gross inconsistency it is to say, that if a man be not converted, it is his own fault; and yet he can do nothing toward this conversion until God has begun it, nor then, unless God continue it also when it is begun! If the language of your creed does not express this, it expresses nothing intelligible; and certes, the bible expresses it, whether

your creed does or not. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." (Philip. i. 6.) See also the following, and observe attentively, that although every man is represented as being in some degree a subject of divine operations, yet are these more or less effectual in each individual according as *God* wills, not as *we* will: "And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: but all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will." (1 Cor. xii. 6—11.) It will be seen that even *faith* is among these divine gifts; and it is certain that we cannot exercise a power which we do not possess, and we cannot possess it except God give it; and he gives it as *he* wills, not as *we* will. Shall we then be damned because he has not in our case willed to bestow it? Extremely reasonable, this! "But he will give it if we ask for it," say you. Indeed! But suppose we do not ask *in faith*, shall we get it for the asking in that case? Most clearly not, if the bible is any authority. (James i. 6, 7.) So then, my friend Arminian, your position amounts to this: "we cannot have faith without asking for it; and we cannot ask for it without first possessing it; and except we do possess it, we shall be damned." This is taking us to hell in a circle!

"But why," you will ask, "our salvation not resulting from a free exercise of our own wills, are we called on in the scriptures, and from the pulpit, to be *active* in the business, when, according to your reasoning, we are but *passive* after all? I admit that there is seeming weight in this objection: it is easily answered, however. The government which God exercises over us is not *direct* and *compulsory*, but *moral*; it consists in his employing inducements, as exhortations, promises, rewards, etc., for the purpose of influencing our *wills*; and so entirely is our free consent engaged in the performance of the parts assigned us, that we are little

aware of the absolute dominion which God is exercising over us : we are aware, indeed, that motives govern us, but we seldom inquire, who governs motives ? Consistently with the notion of man's free agency, it is difficult, indeed impossible, to understand the thousand promises with which the scriptures abound, of what God will do in, and for, the parties to whom those promises relate ; for there is necessarily implied therein an interference with the freedom of the will. See the following as a sample : " For in my holy mountain, in the mountain of the height of Israel, saith the Lord God, there shall all the house of Israel, all of them in the land, serve me : there will I accept them, and there will I require your offerings, and the first-fruits of your oblations, with all your holy things. I will accept you with your sweet savour, when I bring you out from the people, and gather you out of the countries wherein ye have been scattered : and I will be sanctified in you before the heathen. And there shall ye remember your ways, and all your doings, wherein ye have been defiled ; and ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for all your evils that ye have committed. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have wrought with you for my name's sake, not according to your wicked ways, nor according to your corrupt doings, O ye house of Israel, saith the Lord." (Ezek. xx. 40, 41, 43, 44.) David says, in relation to the ultimate moral redemption of the Jewish nation by Jehovah, " thy people *shall be willing* in the day of thy power." (Ps. cx. 3.) And how was this willingness to be effected in them ? Paul shall answer : " Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, *for it is God which worketh in you*, BOTH TO WILL AND TO DO of his good pleasure." (Phil. ii. 13.)

Old Mr. Benevolus promised his son, that he might have the morrow to himself, to do on it whatsoever he pleased ; whereupon John planned that he would begin the day with fishing—he would repair to a neighboring forest and hunt until noon, and the residue of the day he would devote to a sailing excursion with some companions. " You have given him a dangerous license, my dear," observed old Mrs. Benevolus, when John was out of hearing ; " I am afraid that harm will come of it." " None whatever," replied the father, " for without violating my word to him in the least, I promise you he shall do just what we choose." So the old folk

arranged it between them that a party of young persons should be invited to spend the morrow at their house ; all kinds of attractive amusement were included in the plan, and among the party was to be a winning nymph, a cousin of John's, whose bright eyes were known to exert a fascination over his young heart ; and there was to be music, and dancing, and every variety of fruits and confections. Jack jumped, and tossed his hat into the air for joy—away went his projected schemes of fishing, and hunting, and sailing ; for he would'nt be absent from the party, he said, for the price of his new fowling-piece. You can hardly say, reader, that John was a free agent, for the old folks controlled his will ; and yet you perceive he did just as he pleased.

You may not like this view of things, reader, and I will tell you why ; it is not flattering to your self-love ; you better like the notion that your superiority over others is the result of your own independent exertions. “Not of yourselves, it is the gift of God,” is a text which soundeth not well in the ear of your pride ; and you doubtless thank not Paul for asking the troublesome questions in the following passage. “For who maketh thee to differ from another ? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive ? now, if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it ?” (1. Cor. iv. 7.) And since this brings us to a consideration of the religious differences between some and others, we may as well get to close quarters on this branch of the argument.

A. is a christian, B. is not ; why ? “Because A. chooses so to be, and B. does not.” But why do A. and B. choose so differently ? “Because the one is naturally less perverse and obstinate than the other.” And pray who made the one to be thus naturally less vicious than the other ? You are here brought up short, my friend reader. If B. had possessed the same natural dispositions and advantages as A., is it not plain that B. would be a christian too ? And can he help, (and must he be endlessly damned for) not having had the same advantages ? So your creed impliedly asserts, and so Calvinism directly decides ; between the two isms, therefore, (as I have said,) there is not a hair's breadth of rational difference. It is no detriment to Arminianism, however, that it is essentially identical with Calvinism ; on the contrary, it is on that account the more accordant with the scriptures. (“For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good

or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth,) it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." (Rom. ix. 11—18.)

It is impossible to read the writings of Paul with unbiased mind, without seeing on the face thereof that in his judgment certain persons are elected from eternity to be the subjects of gospel faith and obedience, whilst others are doomed to remain in darkness and unbelief. Speaking of the comparative fewness of God's worshippers in the days of Elijah, he represents Jehovah as saying to that prophet, "I have reserved to myself seven thousand souls who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal." (Rom. xi. 4.) On which the apostle remarks, "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then is it no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace; otherwise work is no more work." (Rom. xi. 5, 6.) The same doctrine is carried out in other parts of the scripture; Christ tells his disciples, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." (John xv. 16.) And whilst (as before shown in this work) the greater number of the Jewish people were debarred from belief in him by the purposes of God, a knowledge of his Messiahship was forced upon others, who are termed "the elect," and in regard to whom it is said, "and as many as were *ordained* to eternal life, believed." (Acts xiii. 48.) It has been seen that Thomas did not believe in Christ *from choice*, but *from necessity*; and assuredly Paul himself had *no will* in being thrown from his horse and convinced by ocular evidence that he was persecuting the Lord Messiah! Nothing is clearer from the scriptures than that believers in those times regarded themselves as particularly elect-



ed and foreordained to that privilege. "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." (Ephe. i. 4, 5.) Peter plainly sets forth the same fact in his epistles: he tells the Gentile converts to whom he writes, that while the Jews were afore-appointed unto a disobedience and rejection of the gospel, that themselves were an elect people, "a chosen generation;" having now obtained mercy, "that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." (1 Peter ii. 7, 8, 9.)

To the more superficial part of my readers, an explanation may be necessary, why we should *suffer for sin*, if it is committed agreeably to the fore-appointment of God. Should we suffer for what we cannot help? Let such remember that they are as much concerned to answer this question as I am; for, whatever their doctrine may be, they must see it to be the fact, that *we do suffer for what we cannot help*. We suffer so soon as we are born. Can we help being born? We suffer greatly from teething. Can we help this natural operation? Many of us suffer from hereditary diseases. Can we help those diseases? And lastly, if our lives are prolonged, we suffer from the decay of age, and surely we cannot prevent that decay. "But why should we be censured and punished for sin, if its commission be but the result of foreordination?" You are answered, reader, so soon as you answer yourself, why you crush with detestation the odious reptile under your foot, when you know it cannot help being the reptile that it is! And why you love any beautiful being, and hate a loathsome one, when the one nor the other can account for being what it is! Truth is, our Creator has designed that this existence should be one of partial suffering—moral as well as physical suffering; and in appointing the end, he has also appointed the means. Sin is the main means by which the former is brought on; he who sins most, has most moral suffering: God has joined these two things together, and no man can put them asunder. The reader will therefore learn not to plead this doctrine as an excuse for sinning the more, for, so sure as he does so, he must suffer the more. All this, I know, would reflect no glory upon the Crea-

tor's character, but for the fact—the glorious, heart-cheering fact, that out of all this shall issue an universally benevolent result; “our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”

And now, my smart Free-thinker, do you object to the bible because it inculcates this doctrine? I will then show you that it is as accordant with fact as with scripture. Is it because men *please* that one is born of rich, and another of poor parents; one of vicious, and another of virtuous parents; one grows up in decent, and another in profligate society? Had I been born in the Chinese empire, I should, in a civil respect, have been a slave, and in a religious, a worshipper of the Mogul, or the Lama. Had I been born of Russian peasants, I should have been a serf; but having been born in America, I am a freeman. Did I choose where, or of what parentage I should be born? No—this in the order of providence was determined for me by my Creator. Even in christendom I might have been born of infidel parents, and educated in infidel principles, in which case, in perfect honesty of heart, I should have probably adopted an infidel creed. Or I might have been born a subject of certain moral imbecilities, which would have determined my religious character for life, such as a flexibility of purpose and of principle; my intellect might have been feeble, lacking in forethought and judgment, whilst my animal propensities might have been violent. Who will say, that thus constituted, I should not have found it more difficult to be a virtuous man, than do others of different natural powers and temperament? Say now, if you can, that our moral characters are determined for us by our own free choice. No sir, if you believe in a God, you must refer all the events of life to his pre-appointment. But you are an Atheist, perhaps? Well then, your goddess, Chance, with her bandaged eyes and dizzy brain, has fixed these affairs of human life thus irreversibly, by the force of her blind decrees. And are we profited by the exchange of an Almighty deity, whose benevolent energies are unerringly,

“From seeming evil still educing good,  
And better thence again, and better still,  
In infinite progression,”

for an unseeing, unthinking, unfeeling fatuity, whose hap-hazard determinations can never be brought to any beneficent conclusion?

The Arminian's favorite and stereotyped maxim is, that whatever may be the civil or the constitutional differences among men, the spirit of God operates sufficiently upon all, to make each man's advantages for salvation the same, and to leave all inexcusable who are not saved at last. This I deny :—the scriptures, facts, and virtually their own creeds and prayers, deny it ; they are in the constant habit of thanking God for advantages which they themselves possess over others. Who, that has read the lives of Bunyan, Tennant, John Newton, Col. Gardner, Brainard, Bramwell, the Wesleys, Adam Clarke, and others of that class, can help admitting that a well arranged train of providences determined them to be what they were ? I have before shown that on Christ's own authority, God did less for Sodom than he afterward did for Chorazin and Bethsaida, and that the former could have been saved, had as much been done for it as had been done for the latter ! And God himself told Jerusalem, which he spared, that her sins greatly exceeded those of Sodom, which he had cut off ! (Ezek. xvi.) Has the sinner who is cut off in the bloom of youth, and just as he is ripened for hell, equal advantage with him who lives in sin until his hairs are hoary, and who then from sheer satiety turns from sin with loathing, and prepares for heaven ? If the natural advantages of all men were equal, and an equal measure of divine assistance were afforded to all, it is certain that the effect upon all would be the same, and if *any* would be christians *all* would be. If even the natural advantages of all men were *not* equal, yet if the measure of divine assistance were proportioned to the requirements of each, the same result would follow ; for similar causes will invariably, under like circumstances, produce similar results. But all men are not in a like degree affected by divine grace ; *therefore, all men have not the same opportunities afforded them in this world, for securing their salvation in the next.* Thus Arminianism is logically refuted. For example, if my organ of veneration (phrenologically speaking) is smaller than another's, it will require more external means to excite religious affections in me than in him ; if more is not granted me, and he have but barely enough for his salvation, it will follow that I shall be damned for the lack of the aid which my Maker saw to be indispensable to my salvation. Could I prevent that lack ? Or, if my organ of marvel-

lousness is small, I shall require more evidence to satisfy me of the truth of christianity than will another of greater credulity; if that additional evidence is withheld, should I (as I could not help it) be eternally damned therefor? God created some to the clearly foreseen end that they should suffer an eternity of pains: did he love these as well as those whom he created to a different end? Say nay, and you pronounce him partial; say yea, and it follows, as he is unchangeable, that the wicked inhabitants of hell shall to eternity be as much the subjects of his love as the pure inhabitants of heaven! Once more——But what boots it to chase Arminianism through its various corkscrew windings! I have already shown it to be one with Calvinism in fact, and only differing from it in verbal modification; its abettors are constantly letting out this truth in their prayers, and sermons, and related experiences. John Wesley, in his tract on the efficacy of prayer, for example, relates that a certain woman implored the Lord to dedicate to himself her infant from its birth, and to make it the subject of his special protection; consequently, saith the good but credulous divine, the earliest lisplings of that child were prayers and expressions of piety; and when he grew up, he became an eminent christian. Now, to say nothing of the weakness of supposing, that the unchangeable Jehovah could be induced by the mother's prayers to love the poor child better than he otherwise would have done, and to take the case as it stands, what does it prove? It proves that because the mother implored him to be so, he was *partial* to that child; he did more for it than for others: independently of its own agency he stamped upon it a religious character, by virtue of which, it is to be presumed, it got to heaven at last; it might otherwise have got to an endless hell!

“Great God! on what a slender thread  
Hang everlasting things!”

So exclaims an Arminian poet, and well may he so exclaim.

Believe me, reader, it is not possible to avoid the conclusion, that all events take place agreeably to the unalterable decrees of Jehovah; whether we look at facts, as recorded in history or in our own experience, or as they transpire around us, or whether we examine the subject in the light of the scriptures or of common sense, we are irresistibly brought to this conclusion: most gladly would I have avoided it if it had been possible, for my

prepossessions were strong, and of long standing against it; and even though at length convinced of its truth, yet had I a struggle with the remnant of prejudice within me ere I could consent to discuss it in this work. I feared two things; 1st, that the doctrine of necessity (as it is called) might prove practically injurious; and, God knows, I would not consent to acquire wealth or fame (allowing my poor production could procure me either) by means which might prove injurious to mankind. After duly weighing this consideration, I came to the following conclusion: Truth is from God, it therefore cannot be injurious, but the contrary; moreover, the brightest lights of the christian church, of all past ages, have believed in, and maintained this truth; many even who have suffered martyrdom for the cause of Christ—a great majority of the Scotch nation (not notorious for impiety, certainly) have always maintained it since they became protestant: our pilgrim fathers, too, were unanimous in its belief. Indeed, if we but reflect seriously upon it we must see, that this truth not only exalts the divine character, but it furnishes inducements to man to trust in God, and cheerfully to acquiesce in the allotments of his providence, inasmuch as all are to be brought to a good issue at the last; whereas the persuasion that all things, even interests of endless and inconceivable magnitude, are left contingent on the vagaries of human will, must necessarily tend to affect the mind with despair—to induce distrusts of God's wisdom and goodness—to beget suspicions that in omitting to provide against our final undoing, he betrayed a recklessness in regard to us, quite incompatible with his professions of love, and of desire for our salvation. Thus my first objection to a discussion of this point was removed. My 2nd was, that it would render my book more vulnerable to——to what? Not to valid objections, reader, but to misrepresentation; to the vapid common-place of party decrual, &c. for religious controversy is conducted frequently with great dishonesty; however, this weighs little with me, for I must not suppress truth from a fear of what the consequences of its publication may be to myself. I have published it, therefore, and if any should undertake its refutation, I beg them to be assured, that their success will not be hailed with greater pleasure by their own party, than by the author.

## ELECTION AND REPROBATION

## SCRIPTURALLY ILLUSTRATED.

This article, reader, is designed as a sequel to the one foregoing, and in this many important points will be cleared up, which in that were left out of view, for I wish to avoid fatiguing your mind by over-long articles; and I hope, moreover, to gain your attention the better by varying the style of the whole as much as possible: for this purpose we shall prosecute the residue of this branch of our discussion in a conversational form; the parties in the conversation are supposed to be a Calvinist, an Arminian, and the author.

*Calvinist.* I most fully concur in your conclusion, that absolute foreknowledge necessarily implies absolute foreordination; and therefore that all things exist agreeably to the divine will and appointment: I often tell my Arminian brethren that their notion of a God who leaves the most momentous affairs to be determined by contingencies, is but little, if any, better than atheism; because, like it, it makes it a matter of mere chance whether existing things shall issue in a desirable order and harmony, or whether they shall progress from bad to worse to eternity: even in heaven we may not be secure against the bad effects of free agency; another rebellion may take place there, another battle, and another expulsion of a part of its blissful inhabitants to the dwelling place of the damned.

*Arminian.* But you forget, sir, that we have the positive word of Jehovah, that the state of the redeemed in heaven shall be one of changeless felicity.

*Calvinist.* Yes, he has so promised, I grant, and he may mean that such shall be the case; but it is none the more certain for that, if your doctrine be true, for he is constantly breaking through his purposes, and doing acts which he meant not to do! He meant that sin should never enter the world, yet it entered; he meant that man should live eternally in Eden, yet he drove him out; he meant that man should be immortal, yet he dies; he meant too that his Son should save the world, yet by much the larger part of it is to be damned! In like manner, he may very sincerely

mean that our future bliss shall be changeless, yet it may prove quite otherwise ; and the time in future ages may come, when all the purity and the bliss in existence may be confined to his own essence, and all the universe besides may be a chaos of sin and desolation.

*Author.* And besides that, my friend Arminian, God, you say, does not interfere with the freedom of the will, and therefore, he cannot keep you in heaven if he would, provided you should make up your mind not to stay there. If you can point out a way in which, consistently with free agency, he can prevent you from sinning in heaven, you will show a way by which he could have prevented our sinning on earth, and drawing down infinite ruin upon our heads : if you say that he did not choose to employ that way, you in effect assert that he did not choose to save us, by the only mode practicable, from sin and eternal woe ! And what is this but taking Calvinistic ground outright ?

*Calvinist.* Well, to continue the subject with which I begun, I am heartily glad to find that we can travel the same road with regard to the divine decrees, and the utter exclusion of human works and human will from the business of salvation ; but our road forks at length, I perceive ; you assume that God has decreed to save all men, and that in due time he will effectually call and bring them in, if not in time, at some period beyond ; here, then, we must part, for our road branches into two, between which there is a wide separation. You admit the doctrine of election to be scriptural ; why not then the doctrine of reprobation also, for the one presupposes the other ?

*Author.* Not always. Do our elections at the polls presuppose the reprobation of the public ? On the contrary, the good of the mass, who are not elected, is consulted, and designed to be subserved by the instrumentality of those who are. When an individual is proposed for an office among us, we inquire whether he will be likely to prove a faithful public servant—whether he will be true to the interests of his constituents—and being satisfied on this head, we give him our suffrages ; thus it is seen, that in electing some to distinguished places, instead of reprobating the residue, we propose the general good. God elects on the same principle. Why were the Jews elected to be God's peculiar people ? Evidently that the true worship of God might be pre-

served in the world, until the time should be ripe for its more general diffusion. In electing Pharaoh (in the order of his providence) to be king of Egypt, Jehovah had views to the good of the world at large; not only that he might show his power in him, but also that his name might be declared throughout all the earth. (Rom. ix. 17.) The Savior himself was elected to ends of universal benevolence. "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth: I have put my Spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law. I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thy hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house. (Isaiah xlii. 1, 3, 4, 6, 7.) Christ elected his apostles also, not for their own exclusive good, but as his instruments in diffusing the blessings of the gospel to mankind at large. And those who through faith in the gospel are brought to a present knowledge and enjoyment of God, are far from being to be considered the whole harvest of grace in the world; they are but "a kind of first-fruits of his creatures." (James i. 18.) Now to all acquainted with Jewish usages, it is known that the first-fruits, when presented as an offering to the Lord, were (if accepted) considered as an earnest of the successful ingathering of the entire harvest; to this fact Paul alludes, when he says, "for if the first-fruits be holy, the lump is also holy." (Rom. xi. 16.) And this remark from him is particularly worthy of notice, when we consider its application; for reprobated as were at that time the bulk of the Jewish people, yet they are all to be brought in at last (as the apostle argues) for the first-fruits of the nation (the patriarchal fathers) were holy: "And as is the root, so are the branches." The apostle introduces the same figure also when maintaining that the whole creation shall be redeemed, and that the bliss of any portion thereof must necessarily be incomplete until that important event is consummated; there is (he represents) an earnest looking and longing for it on the part of all creatures. "And not only they, but our-



selves also, which have the *first-fruits* of the Spirit ; even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." - (Rom. viii. 23.) He again employs the figure of the first-fruits when treating on the resurrection of the dead ; he considers the presentation and acceptance of Christ our spiritual head as the first-fruits from the grave, to be a sure pledge of the ultimate gathering in of the whole harvest of mankind. " But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the *first-fruits* of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order : Christ the *first-fruits* ; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father ; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." (1 Cor. xv. 20—28.) In this view of election there is nothing repulsive to common sense, to justice, to goodness, as there undeniably is in the Calvinistic view of the subject. On the contrary, all is here consistent, beautiful, benevolent ; the elect of God are but the first fruits of his grace ; the present earnest of that victory over sin, and assimilation to infinite purity, which it will eventually achieve in the whole human race.

*Calvinist.* Very pretty, I grant ; very plausible too, to mere human reason, but we are not to estimate things by the standard of our frail judgments ; we are to remember that we are infinite offenders against God, and as such, deserving of his holy displeasure to all eternity. Consequently, we——

*Arminian.* Stay ! I wish to know how we can deserve God's displeasure to all eternity, if, (as you and the author both maintain,) we are not free agents ; we do only such things as he fore-ordained we should do ; we cannot be righteous except he see fit to make us so, and yet for not being what we could not be,

we are deserving of the great Jehovah's infinite displeasure ! Why, my dear sir, one must have a credulity equal to an earthquake to swallow all this !

*Author.* You swallow it, nevertheless, my friend, as well as he, for I have proven sin to have been foreordained on your principles as well as on his ; your notion of man's free agency I have shown to be a phantasm, and consequently, if it is unjust and cruel in God to inflict endless suffering on his ground, it is equally so on your's. The doctrine of endless misery is equally indefensible on either ; it reflects equal discredit upon the divine character on both.

*Calvinist and Arminian.* Yes, if mere *human* reason is to be the judge.

*Author.* As a human being, I can have no other than human reason ; I must either exercise that, or none ; if none, why are the claims of God upon my love, my homage, my confidence, pressed upon my consideration ? If my understanding cannot comprehend the acts of my Creator, I cannot then know whether they are wise or foolish, good or evil, and therefore I cannot tell whether he is entitled to my love or my hatred, my admiration or my contempt. The very fact of our being called on to adore and serve him, presupposes our capacity to understand the nature and the grounds of our obligations to him. Away ! then, with your senseless decrivals of human reason, for Jehovah himself has honored it by frequent appeals to it in his word.

*Calvinist.* Well, waiving that matter for the present, let us attend further to the original point between us : you have shown that election does not necessarily imply reprobation. I grant it does not, but I still contend that there are some cases of special reprobation brought to view in the scriptures. Take the following as instances : " But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost : in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ who is the image of God, should shine unto them." (2 Cor. iv. 3, 4.) " And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie ; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thes. ii. 11, 12.)

*Author.* I have not meant to deny the scripture doctrine of reprobation ; on the contrary, I have shown that whilst some are

called to eminent gospel privileges, others, (at least in this life,) are excluded from all participation therein. Yet, thanks to God ! we are not left in hopeless darkness as to the final fate of even these reprobates ; the great apostle has most satisfactorily cleared up this point : he has shown that there is to be an eventual and universal ingathering of reprobated Israel, when the fulness of the (once rejected, but subsequently elected) Gentiles be come in ; in the very casting off of the Jewish people, mercy was designed to the rest of the world. " I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall ? God forbid : but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. Now, if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles ; how much more their fulness ? For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead ?" (Rom. xi. 11, 12, 15.) This will show the purpose of God in sending them " strong delusions ;" and it also shows us the end of the damnation consequent thereof : the same is also expressed in the following. " For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief ; even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all." (Ibid. 30—32.) We see then that the " lost," to whom, in the days of the apostles, the gospel was " hid," were not by Paul considered as irrecoverably so ; it was " the lost" whom Christ came " to seek and to save." Neither does it follow, that because some seem at the present in a far-gone condition of darkness and sin, they are eternally to remain in it.

*Calvinist.* What meant the Savior, then, when he represented such only to be his sheep as hear his voice and follow him ? And does not his promise that he gives unto them eternal life, and that they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of his hand, imply on the face of it that he will not do the same for all the human race ?

*Author.* It certainly implies that he *does* not do the same for all, but not that he *never will*. It is granted that some are his people in a peculiar sense, and that others are not so at the present time ; but if we affirm that the same shall to all eternity be the

case, we must set a large part of the bible at nought. Jesus himself says, "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." (John x. 16.) Even in our strayed condition we are spoken of as sheep of his flock, and he, as the shepherd, pursues in order to bring us back to the fold. "All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." (Isa. liii. 6.) Who that has read, and attentively considered, the beautiful parable of the lost sheep, can doubt the benevolent perseverance of the shepherd in pursuing sinful and wandering man, until he has fully succeeded in the object of the pursuit? Truth is, that elect and reprobate are distinctions belonging to *time* only, and not even to *all* of time; for, as before shown, the Jews, once highly favored, are now reprobate; the Gentiles, once reprobate, are now highly favored. Anon the Jews shall be gathered in with the fulness of the Gentiles, and all distinctions shall be lost forever; there shall then be neither Jew nor Greek, barbarian nor Scythian, bond nor free, but all shall be one in Christ Jesus. In the speech which James delivered in the apostolic council at Jerusalem, the doctrine of election and reprobation is presented in perfect harmony with these views. "Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, *to take out of them a people for his name.* [These were the elect; some *taken out* from the mass as subjects for gospel grace.] And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up; that *the residue of men* [those left, after some had been taken out] might seek after the Lord, and *all the Gentiles*, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things." (Acts xv. 14—17.) We here have the rejected, the passed by, the reprobates, plainly brought in at last; and were it otherwise, the declarations that God is impartial, and that his ways are equal, would be without any meaning intelligible to mankind.

*Calvinist.* It is not partiality in the great Jehovah to damn one sinner *according* to, and save another *contrary* to, his deservings; in the one case he glorifies his justice, in the other his grace.

All deserve to be damned, and would be damned but for his electing mercy, which snatches some from their merited doom, "as brands from the burning." The non-elect have no ground for complaint, for their condition is rendered no worse by the salvation of others than it otherwise would be; hence with the pious Baxter we may exclaim, "Let **DESERVED** be written upon the gates of hell, but on the gates of heaven be inscribed **THE FREE GIFT**."

*Author.* Did not your creed blind your eyes to the light of reason, my friend, you would be far from satisfied with this disposition of the case; for, first, as our friend Arminian has shown, endless ruin *is not, cannot be, deserved*, by acting in accordance with the divine pre-appointment. And, in the second place, if it even were deserved, both justice, and the principle of impartiality, require that either all should be punished alike, or pardoned alike, since all are alike involved in a common guilt. What would be thought of a chief magistrate, (in whom our constitution has vested the pardoning power, for discretionary exercise,) if he, acting on the principle you ascribe to the deity, should pardon one part of a piratical crew, and hang the other, when both were equally guilty? Would the public mind approve so arbitrary and capricious a use of his prerogative? On the contrary, would it not arouse against him the honest indignation of every thinking man? If some of the pirates were less deserving of death than others, that would alter the case; but this is not the posture in which your creed places it: according to it, all are alike guilty, and alike deserving of punishment; and yet that same God whose "ways are equal," and "who will render unto every man according to his works," damns some *according to*, and saves others *contrary to*, their deservings! Truly, my friend, to believe this does require a most marvellous credulity!

*Arminian.* Mr. Author, I like your views of election and reprobation right well, they effectually vindicate the goodness and equity of our Creator: but I cannot be reconciled to your views of foreordination; nor can I see any use, if they be correct, in your preaching, writing, or using other means for the reformation of mankind. Why, I ask, do you use means in order to an end which is unchangeably foreordained?

*Author.* Because they also are foreordained. Isaiah announced

to Hezekiah, king of Judah, that God had appointed him to live yet fifteen years; nevertheless, this did not prevent, on the part of the sick monarch, a recourse to medical means for his recovery. (Isaiah xxxviii. 21.) "Except these abide in the ship," said Paul, "ye cannot be saved," notwithstanding that God had told him that they should all escape, and become converts to the gospel by his means. "For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Cesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, Sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me." (Acts xxvii. 23—25.) It is presumed that Paul did not preach to these the less on account of the assurance that they were to be given to him for converts; it is scarcely probable that he excused himself with the plea, that as God had purposed their conversion, it would be effected with or without means.

*Calvinist.* I fully approve your answer; the purpose respecting the salvation of the elect is indeed unalterable, and the number of the same "is so fixed and definite, that it can neither be added to, nor diminished." Still, as you have said, he who has appointed the end, has also with it appointed the means whereby it is to be effected: and the same is true with regard to the reprobate; they are to be damned by the agency of appointed means—the gospel was appointed "a savour of life unto life, and of death unto death."

*Arminian.* The poor reprobate then would have been better off without it, if it is only to prove to him an instrument of final ruin. This is truly horrible! It follows conclusively from your view, that the gospel is an occasion of greater evil than good, by as much as the number of the damned will exceed that of the saved! And is this "the gospel of the grace of God?" Oh! assuredly not. I see now a great utility in preaching on universalist principles, inasmuch as it is to be an effectual means in God's own time and way of bringing into the fold of life the whole of human kind; an end, this, worthy of such means! and a means, this, (I may add) worthy of such an end! But to preach the glorious gospel to intelligent creatures for the mere purpose of furnishing an excuse for damning them eternally! God of heaven! how diseased by corrupting creeds must be the mind of that man, who

can tolerate such an absurdity! You affirm that the gospel is appointed as a sure means of bringing about a total ruin to millions—the universalist has it a sure means of accomplishing a final salvation for all.

*Calvinist.* And according to Arminianism it will prove a *sure* means of accomplishing *nothing*! It *may*, or it *may not*, just as it shall *happen*! All may be saved, or none! God may prevail, or the devil! hell may be useless, because tenantless, or all the universe besides may be depopulated to people it! all is uncertainty, nothing is sure! Now, agreeably to my system, *something*, at least, is certain; the purposes of Jehovah, seconded by his power to fulfil them, are a guarantee that he has not created in vain; nor has Jesus died, nor the scriptures been given, nor the gospel been preached, nor the spirit operated, but that all whom from eternity he designed for salvation, shall be saved.

*Arminian.* *All whom he designed for salvation!* I wonder then you don't turn universalist at once; for I am sure it is susceptible of easy and clear proof, that *all* were designed for salvation; and if all so designed shall be saved, why then, *all* shall be saved! This is giving in to universalism with a witness.

*Author.* Well, well, gentlemen, we may as well bring our conversation to a close, for you cannot sufficiently agree together to unite in opposing me; on the contrary, you make out a clear proof of my doctrine by the arguments which you urge against each other. One of you affirms, that there is, on God's part, a plenitude of *power* for the salvation of all: the other, that there is a plenitude of *disposition*. What, then, is left to me to prove? for a full disposition to do a thing, and a power adequate to its performance, implies with certainty that the thing shall be done. It must be evident to your candor, gentlemen, that each of your systems, taken separately, "limits the Holy One of Israel;" out of both, united, a theory may be framed which will well harmonize with the divine perfections. Universalism, in my judgment, is that theory.

*Arminian.* Nevertheless, I must still object against both yours and the Calvinian system, that, by assuming that all things are the result of divine appointment, they make God the author of all the sin in the universe!

*Author.* We make him the author of all things, indeed; so do

the scriptures ; so does common sense ; and so, I may add, does your own doctrine also, as has been shown before. It can make no actual difference between us in this respect that you say, God *permits*, while we say, he *appoints*, for the result is the same in both cases. I have a tiger chained to a stake ; without my permission it can do no harm ; there is a group of lovely children playing near by ; the monster is glaring at them, his eyes flash fire, he claws the ground, and gnashes his teeth with rage. Shall I permit him to get loose among them ? It is done ; he has broke his chain ; he has bounded into their midst : merciful heaven, what a scene of carnage ensues ! their screams pierce my soul ! My conscience accuses me of the deed, but I am guiltless ! I am guiltless ! I only *permitted* it.

An act is sinful only as it is committed with a sinful design ; God's designs, like himself, are infinitely and unchangeably good, consequently, he cannot sin in any act or appointment of his, (however much suffering may be involved in its present operations,) because not only is such act, or appointment, *designed* for ultimate benefit to all who are affected by it, but the Being who so designed has *power* sufficient to bring such benefit to pass.

The tiger is loose, (by which I would personate sin and misery,) whether by appointment, or permission, you must see that the divine character is equally concerned in the event. Shall it roam and make havoc amongst God's offspring forever ? or shall it be destroyed—the wounds it has inflicted be healed, and the subjects of its violence be brought to see and experience, that, all things considered, it was better for them to have suffered from its fury for a time, that thereby their happiness might be enhanced for eternity ? Your creed renders an affirmative answer to the former question—mine to the latter. And now tell me, candidly, which answer is the more consonant with the glory, the wisdom, the benevolence of the infinite Creator ? Put your hand on your heart and answer.

To the question, " Why do you write, and preach, since, as all things take place by necessity, you cannot alter them ? " my answer is, I *can* alter such things as were appointed to be altered by my means. As before observed, when *ends* are ordained, the *means* for effecting them are ordained also ; there is then all the use for means upon this scheme, as upon any other.



“But how would you reply to a criminal,” (I may be asked,) “who should plead, that as it was foreappointed to him to commit the deed, he ought not to be punished for it?” I would answer him, that it was also foreordained that he should suffer for the act. It was certainly foreordained that Judas should betray the Savior, and also that he should experience the *woe* pronounced upon him therefor.

If you don't like this view of things, good friend, whoever you be, the author will be most happy to have you refute it: show that it is contrary to scripture; contrary to experience, to fact; and bring forward, in lieu thereof, a scheme which shall unite the suffrages of all these in its favor; which shall better consist with the Omnipotence and sovereignty of the great Jehovah; and not only will the author become your most willing convert, but he will make you, into the bargain, his most sincere and humble bow of thanks.

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## EVERLASTING, FOREVER, &c.

### A BRIEF VIEW OF THE ARGUMENT FROM THESE TERMS.

We are apt to forget, in this branch of the discussion, that the question is not about the meaning of *English* words; for as the bible was not written in English, the meaning of terms in that language can have nothing whatever to do with the settling of the inquiry as to its doctrines. The proper question before us is, What is the meaning of the *Hebrew* and *Greek* words, which are rendered *everlasting*, *eternal*, etc., in our version of the scriptures? In the attempt to maintain the doctrine of endless suffering, it has been most strenuously contended, that the radical and most usual sense of these words is *unceasing duration*. If, however, we attend to their applications, we shall have reason for considering this definition extremely questionable: they are applied to hills, and mountains; to the term of human life; to the Aaronic priesthood; to the Jewish ordinances; to their possession of the holy land, and to many other things of temporary duration. In one

instance, *forever* is applied to a period of three days. (Jonah ii. 6.) If such uses of terms were only occasional, if they occurred but now and then, and after long intervals, we might suppose them employed out of their strict and ordinary signification; but such is far from the fact; on the contrary, their application to limited periods is so frequent, that the best critics in the languages have defined them as "*expressing duration, but with great variety.*"

That they are frequently used to express eternity is granted, chiefly as applied to God and his attributes; but then, it must be observed, their being so applied is no evidence, that this is their radical meaning, for we also find *days, years, and ages*, similarly applied. (Ps. lxxxix. 29; Mic. v. 2; Ps. cii. 24, 27; Isa. xxvi. 4; Ephe. iii. 21.) Yet surely none will hence infer that these words, apart from their connexion, imply eternity, although as thus applied they undeniably do. The same is true of *everlasting, forever*, etc.: when the subject to which they are applied is in its own nature eternal, they are to be understood as expressing that sense; but when the duration of the subject is limited, they must be understood as implying but a limited duration.

Seemeth it at all probable, reader, that if the radical sense of these words were as affirmed by the doctors of endless misery, Jehovah would have employed them as he has in his commands to the Jews? He surely did not purpose that their peculiar religion should be of perpetual obligation; yet he directed that the priesthood should be everlasting. (Ex. xl. 15.) He set apart the house of Aaron to this office *forever*. (Deut. xviii. 5.) He gave the Jews the land of Canaan for an *everlasting* possession. (Gen. xvii. 8; xlviii. 4.) He instituted the sabbath as a sign betwixt him and them *forever*. (Numb. x. 8.) The atonement was to be an *everlasting* statute. (Lev. xvi. 34.) Their ordinances of the passover, (Ex. xii. 15.) tabernable, (Ibid. xxxi. 17.) and circumcision, (Deut. xxviii. 46.) were to last *forever*. And the same term, in its duplicated form, is applied to their possession of the promised land, *forever and ever*. (Jer. vii. 7; xxv. 5.) Many similar texts might be quoted, in which these terms are used in a way greatly to have deceived the Jews, if their generally received sense had been unending duration; for they would in that case naturally have inferred that their institutions were to continue

without end, whereas it is well known that God meant it but as a preparatory dispensation, to be succeeded by another of superior excellence and glory.

In Hawes' Reasons against Universalism, (published by the American Tract Society,) it is affirmed of these terms that they "*invariably imply the longest duration of which the subject to which they are applied is capable.*" About as true, this, as many other statements in the same work. Was not the Jewish sabbath capable of being continued longer than it was? Was Canaan incapable of being possessed by them to the end of time? Was not their priesthood capable of being continued indefinitely? Could not Jehovah have secured the sacerdotal office to the family of Phineas (in which it was to continue *forever*) for more than 400 years? Was the fish incapable of containing Jonah for more than three days? Truth is, that the declaration falls about as far within the range of truth, as does Nova Zembla within the torrid circle; if I had faith in its verity I should turn Jew at once.

Let us suppose a person, believing in endless misery, to be sent on a mission to a colony of Jews, for the purpose of converting them to christianity; he begins by acknowledging their religion to have been instituted by Jehovah, and to have continued in force for nearly fifteen centuries, but it at length (he tells them) gave place to the religion of Messiah, "who hath changed the customs which Moses delivered," and that all men are now called upon, under a penalty of eternal damnation, to abjure their former faiths, and modes of worship, and become the subjects of the gospel kingdom. They ask him what he understands to be the radical meaning of the terms *everlasting*, and *forever*. How, now, shall he answer them? If he say, that they only require to be understood in the sense of *endless*, when the subject is such in its nature, he will be conceding to universalism all it asks; he will be compromising the main reliance of the dogma of endless suffering. This will not do. If, on the other hand, he tell them, with Mr. Hawes, that they *invariably imply the longest duration of which the subject to which they are applied is capable*, he will subject himself to their scorn. "What!" they will exclaim, "call you upon us to abjure the religion of our fathers, in favor of an upstart system which originated fifteen hundred centuries later, when by your own acknowledgement we are commanded to

retain the former for as long as it is capable of being observed ; for our statutes, and ordinances, and priesthood, were all to be *everlasting, forever, etc.*, and these *imply the longest duration of which the subject is capable !* Why, sir, since you acknowledge the divinity of our scriptures, it becometh you rather to turn Jew, than to call upon us to become christians !" Our missionary would find himself in a sad quandary here.

It may be said, however, that as the immortal state is more distinctly revealed in the New Testament than in the Old, the terms rendered forever, etc., may be used in the former in a more definite and uniform sense. We will see how this is. The primary word in the Hebrew is *oulem*, in the Greek it is *aion* ; the authors of the Septuagint have uniformly employed the latter, in rendering the former, which shows that in their judgment these terms are of similar signification ; and who so capable of judging as they, who were conversant with both languages as spoken ? Truth is, that *aion*, by the consent of the most eminent linguists, is of as uncertain signification as *oulem*. Alexander Campbell says, "*its radical idea is indefinite duration.*" We need only to remark its various applications in the New Testament, to be convinced of this.

It is true that Dr. Clarke says in one place, that it is the strongest word that could have been employed for expressing the eternity of punishment ; and his judgment would have been entitled to respect, high respect, were it not nullified by what himself has said, of the same term in other places, as well as by the fact of its frequent application to periods of time. Eternity never had a beginning, but the beginning of *aion* is alluded to in five different passages. (Luke i. 70 ; John ix. 32 ; Acts iii. 21 ; xv. 18 ; Ephe. iii. 9.) Eternity can have no end, whereas the end of *aion* is spoken of in several places. (1 Cor. x. 11 ; Heb. ix. 26 ; and five times in Matthew.) There can be but one eternity, but the scriptures mention a plurality of *aion*'s. (Tim. i. 17 ; Ephe. iii. 17 ; Col. i. 25.) It is absurd to speak of this eternity, in distinction from a future eternity ; but the scriptures speak of this *aion*, and the *aion* to come, in several instances. (Matt. xii. 32 ; Mark x. 30 ; Luke xviii. 30 ; Gal. i. 4 ; 2 Tim. iv. 10. etc. ; *to come*, Matt. xiii. 32 ; Heb. vi. 5.) And yet *aion* is the strongest term that could have been used to express endless misery ! The

doctor's creed was sadly in the way of his candor when he penned this affirmation.

That the scriptures do employ stronger terms for expressing the duration of the future life, of the glory of heaven, and the risen nature of man, is past denial; they inform us that our being in the resurrection shall be one of *incorruption*, of *immortality*, of *glory*: we shall die *no more*; Christ was made, (they say,) "after the power of an *endless* life." And Christ has said, "Because I live, ye shall live also;" as therefore his life is *endless*, the reason for our life will be endless also. Could the scriptures not have guarantied the eternity of torments by some such expressions? That they could must be admitted, and that they have not is evidence that this doctrine was not designed to be taught therein.

From the writings and preaching of some, one would think that the passages which connect the words everlasting and forever with punishment, constituted a principal part of the sacred writings, whereas the case is so much otherwise, that there are but two passages in the whole of the Old Testament where these terms occur in such connexion; not at all in the gospels of Luke, and John; but once in Mark; not at all in the Acts of the apostles, although several extracts from their preaching are therein contained; but once in all Paul's epistles, which form so considerable part of the New Testament; not at all in the epistles of Peter, James, and John; so that all the instances together would not make so many as may often be found in a six-penny printed sermon, or even a farthing tract. Nevertheless, if found but once in the bible, in a sense corresponding to our English word *endless*, it would be sufficient to authorize the classing of that sentiment among the doctrines of inspiration.

Still it must be confessed, in that case, that the bible would stand most grossly self-contradicted; for who could then affirm that the *wrath* of Jehovah is not as enduring as his *mercy*? whereas the bible, over and over again, represents the former as but momentary, and the latter as enduring forever! Who could affirm, too, that the Lord will not always chide, be always wroth, nor contend, nor cast off, forever? But the bible does so affirm! Who could say that God loves his enemies, overcomes evil with good, and is without variableness or shadow of turning? And who

could say that he is good to all, and that his tender mercy is over all his works? Yet the scriptures do thus represent him! Such are the contradictions in which the bible must be involved if we allow to the words everlasting, forever, etc., an unlimited signification, as they are applied to punishment.

"But why," I may be asked, "do you take these terms in the sense of endless, when they are connected with promises of this kind, and reject such sense when they are connected with threatenings?" I only so accept these words, reader, when the nature of the subject evidently so requires. How, for example, can we possibly limit their signification in the above quoted promises? "The Lord will not cast off forever"—"will not *always* chide"—"he retaineth not his anger *forever*"—"I will not contend *forever*, neither will I be *always* wroth," etc.; suppose we make *forever*, and *always*, in these texts, to mean a limited period, they will then read, that the Lord will not cast off, nor contend, for a limited period! But this is contrary to fact. There is, then, an evident necessity for understanding everlasting, and forever, in promises of this nature, in an unlimited sense; whereas, if we so understand them as connected with threatenings, we shall have the scriptures involved (as before shown) in most manifest self-contradiction.

Let us take a particular case, in which a contradiction seems to be clearly involved. David, toward the close of his life, admonished Solomon in the following words: "And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind; for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he *will cast thee off forever*." (1 Chron. xxviii. 9.) How shall this closing declaration be reconciled with the declaration in Lamentations? "For the Lord **WILL NOT** *cast off forever*;" for the latter is not *special* in its application, it belongs to no particular *time*, nor *people*, but is *general* and *absolute*. How then shall we reconcile these texts? It can only be done by maintaining that David could not, by *forever*, have intended to *all eternity*; and that he did not is clear from the fact, that he himself has furnished us with the declaration of Jehovah, that he *would not*, in any case, utterly abandon any of his children. "If his children forsake my

law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless, my loving-kindness *will I not utterly take from him*, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail." (Ps. lxxxix. 30—33.) We must not, then, if we would avoid arraying scripture against scripture, understand David as threatening Solomon with an event, which God had solemnly sworn to him should in no case come to pass.

If the inspired writers designed to teach the notion of ceaseless suffering, it is strange, as there unquestionably are words in both the Greek and Hebrew tongues, which could be combined to express that idea in an unequivocal manner; it is strange, I say, that they have in no instance employed such words for the purpose! Mahomet has found words for very clearly teaching this doctrine, in his *Alcoran*; and it is also very unequivocally expressed in the *Book of Mormon*: some of the old christian writers have also clearly enough expressed it. None will deny that it is lucidly set forth in modern creeds; and in fulminations from the popular pulpit, God knows it is dealt out with sufficient intelligibility. The inspired writers alone, it would seem, knew not how to express it in a way to be understood! or they did not try—which is the more likely?

Unending misery! Who ever conceived the import of that expression? Eternal suffering! Suppose the sun (a million times as large as our earth) to be a globe of fire—suppose a spark to be stricken therefrom and extinguished every millionth year, the period would arrive at length, when all those millions of years would have elapsed, and the last spark of the sun would be quenched; but eternity would be as little exhausted, as when the process of extinction commenced! Take a parchment, as broad as the space conceived to be occupied by creation, on all its surface write millions, billions, trillions, quadrillions, etc., making every succeeding number to exceed the one before it; then add all these together, multiply the aggregated sum by another of equal amount, and let each unit in this vast sum represent a myriad of ages—what would all these be to eternity? As the minutest atom to the whole universe!

And in all this time will not the anger of Jehovah abate? Will these ages upon ages of suffering not suffice to appease his wrath,

or to mollify his resentment? No, no, no; suns, particle after particle, millions of years intervening, may be put out forever; ages on ages, beyond the power of numbers to compute, may roll away into the unbeginning past; each planetary member of our solar system, of all the systems composing the universe, may moulder with the slow decay of an atom to every myriad of centuries, but the ire of Omnipotence shall never, never, never, never know ought of diminution! He whose command to us is, "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath," will, nevertheless, cherish toward us a wrath as unextinguishable as his own essence! And what are we, upon whom his almighty energies will be thus avengingly poured down? What? The minutest animalcule which the microscope brings within the reach of vision, bears the same proportion to immensity that we bear to him!

And will no considerations avail, such as his relations to us as Creator, and Father—his having brought us into existence without our consent—the exceeding shortness of our earthly probation—the feebleness of our faculties of understanding and judgment—the dimness and uncertainty amidst which the paths of truth lie hidden from our perceptions—the many passions, appetites, anxieties, interests, and duties, aside from the business of our soul's salvation, which pressed upon our attention, and left us but small time for concern about our eternal affairs—will not these considerations, I say, when pleaded from the depths of our misery in hell, avail us by softening him into compassion? No, no, "*God is love*;" no, no, "*he is kind to the unthankful and to the evil*;" no, no, he "*is good unto all, and his tender mercy is over all his works*;" no, no, he *loves his enemies*; no, no, he "*will not cast off forever*;" no, no, he "*is merciful and gracious*"—"full of compassion"—"*abundant in goodness and truth*," etc., therefore his anger shall endure to eternity, and the misery of his guilty offspring shall have no end!!!



## LAKE OF FIRE, AND SECOND DEATH.

These expressions occur in the book of Revelation only. I introduce them here, not because I have the vanity to suppose that I can furnish the true key to their meaning, for I pretend not to be able to do this with certainty, but because they are usually urged against the universalist faith with the more vehemence, and positiveness, as, of all the other parts of scripture, they are least understood. I can speak to the negative point of what they do not mean, with more confidence than to the positive of what they do.

That *the lake of fire* cannot refer to a place or mode of suffering in another life, is evident from the nature of some of the things subjected to its operation; these are *death*, *hades*, the *beast*, and the *false prophet*. The first three of these, it can scarcely be supposed, are suitable subjects for endless suffering! Death is a mere negation—the absence of life; *hades* is the separate state; the *beast* personates the corruptors and opposers of christianity, or a corrupt hierarchy, some say Jewish, some Pagan, some Romish christian, and some (the Romanists) the pseudo reformed christian; it may mean either of these, or the Lord knows what. Whatever it means, however, it is represented, together with the false prophet, as having been “cast *alive* into a lake of fire, burning with brimstone,” from which, if the lake of fire mean hell, we must infer that they were consigned *bodily, in flesh and blood*, to its sulphurous flames!

It is equally evident that the *second death* cannot signify an *endless death*, (as some assume,) because the inspired testimony is full and clear to the point, that death is to be destroyed, swallowed up in victory, be no more, etc., which may imply any thing rather than that it shall endure, and triumph over millions of Jehovah's offspring, to all eternity!

Touching the meaning of Revelation there is a great diversity of judgment among critics. They are also much divided as to the period at which it was written—some placing it before, some after, the destruction of Jerusalem: to my mind the probabilities seem decidedly to favor the former position; and I also think

that the book chiefly relates to that catastrophe, and to the various circumstances attendant on the introduction of the christian institution. I have, as I think, very substantial reasons in the book itself for this opinion. In the introduction thereto it professes to disclose things that were "shortly to come to pass," and for which it even says, "the time is at hand." (i. 1, 2.) And that the judgments threatened through the book were to have an immediate (and not a remote) fulfilment, seems evidently to be implied in the closing declarations:—"Surely I come quickly;" (xxii. 20.) "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." (xxii. 12.) It seems too that the city and temple of Jerusalem must have been yet standing, not only from their being referred to in several indirect forms, but from the additional fact, that John is directed by the angel to measure the temple. "And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months." (xi. 1, 2.) Moreover, I have (in the article on a general judgment) shown reasons for identifying the judgment so sublimely described in chapter xx., with that of which Daniel spake in a strain of equal grandeur, (Dan. vii. 9.) which is regarded by both Bishop, and Sir Isaac Newton, and other eminent expositors, as portending the momentous events which should attend the destruction of the Mosaic economy, and the setting up of Messiah's kingdom.

By keeping these things in mind, we need be at no very great loss for the understanding of the phrases at the head of this article; we can at least attain a high degree of probability in regard to it. As to *the lake of fire*, we often find that very figure employed in the descriptions of the judgment at the end of that world (*aion*, or *age*); Malachi calls the period thereof "the day that shall burn as an oven." (iv. 1.) Christ said, that at the end of that world, (or *age*), the tares should be cast into *the furnace of fire*. (Matt. xiii. 40.) God expressly says he will gather the Jews into the midst of Jerusalem, and melt them as silver is melted in a furnace. (Ezek. xxii. 18, 22.) And it is said that the Lord's "fire is in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem." (Isa.

xxx. 9.) This, indeed, was a figure to which those whom Christ and his apostles addressed were well accustomed. In Revelation, *the lake of fire* is represented as an agent in destroying, as well as punishing. *Death, hades, the beast, etc.*, are not subjects of punishment; the destruction of the two former, at the time of the introduction of the gospel institution, must imply, I think, that the fundamental and most glorious feature in that gospel, viz., the doctrine of immortality, would effectually and forever dispel, in the minds of believers, all fears and anxieties on the subject of death, and the state beyond it; and that it would also carry their minds forward in anticipation to the final extinction of these and all other foes to human happiness.

*The second death* is also used in reference both to the punishment of sentient beings, and the destruction of insentient things. After the stating, that all liars, adulterers, the unbelieving and abominable, etc., were cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, it is added, "this is the second death:" here the phrase must imply a process of punishment. Again, after telling that death and hell were cast into the lake of fire, the revelator adds, "this is the second death:" it here, unquestionably, implies an utter destruction, for, as stated before, death and hades cannot be subjects of suffering; and, therefore, in this instance the lake of fire cannot signify a place of punishment, or of misery: it were the height of absurdity to speak of casting insentient things into misery; their being cast into a lake of fire can only intimate their destruction.

"But why may it not mean an utter destruction in both cases?" I may be asked. Because, I reply, its application in other places is such as clearly to discountenance such construction. "He that overcometh shall not be *hurt* of the second death." (ii. 11.) From this it is plain that the punishment denominated the second death, was one involving *pain*, and not *destruction*. Moreover, it is said of those who had part in the first resurrection, "on such the second death hath no power." (xx. 6.) These are the overcomers who should not be *hurt* of it: whereas, the fearful, the unbelieving, etc., should be subjected to its full power; the smoke of their torment should ascend "*day and night*, forever and ever." Hence, the phrase implies suffering, not extinction of being; it implies, I may add, *temporal*, or *timely* suffering, where there is an alternation of *day and night*.

In the close of the book, the gospel institution is spoken of under the figure of a city—a holy city *coming down from God out of heaven*; into this pure and happy place none are admitted but such as are pure in character: “there shall in nowise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie, but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life:” the gates thereof are never to be closed, inasmuch as at all times it is to be accessible to all, upon their faith and reformation. In it is no darkness, nor sin, nor death, nor sorrow; old things are there done away, and all things are new. This highly colored description of the gospel state on earth has been often supposed to refer to a time called *Millennium*, when Christ shall literally descend, and live with his saints on this terrestrial globe for a thousand years: but there is no necessity for so extravagant a supposition; any one who has familiarized himself with the poetic style of the sacred penmen, will easily believe that nothing more is intended in this beautiful vision, than the setting up of the kingdom or church of Messiah in the world; the joy, and hope, and purity, and peace, which are the lot of its subjects, and the prospects it would afford to all believers, of a final and glorious issue from the sorrows, and death, and guilt, of this earthly state, in the unending felicity and immortality of heaven.

The Savior never intimated, at any time, in any of his several discourses with his apostles, that he was to come in latter times, and establish a civil dynasty in this world; he would certainly not have left a matter of this consequence unrevealed: we never find it referred to in any of the apostolic epistles, which it unquestionably would have been if it were to take place. It seems to me a weakness, a puerility, to base a doctrine of such magnitude upon a passage or two in a book, which is avowedly the least understood of all the sacred writings! It is admitted that Christ has now a spiritual kingdom on earth—it is admitted that he is present, in doctrine and spirit, in this kingdom—it is admitted that this divine dynasty is extending its conquests over the globe, dispelling sin, and darkness, and despair, and imparting holiness, and light, and hope—it is admitted, moreover, that in the light of this kingdom, death and hades lose their blighting influence over the mind of man, and a clear end, and glorious issue, are seen to all the evils which now infest the world. What more is needed,

then, to meet the just and sober expectations which (making due allowance for the poetic coloring employed in this enigmatical part of the sacred oracles) arise out of what is said by the revelator, about the thousand years' reign of Messiah on the earth? Candor replies—nothing.

Reader, I am greatly averse to dogmatizing, and will not pretend, therefore, that I have infallibly unfolded the true significance of the parts of this mystical book which I have touched upon; but this I will affirm, that I have given you my own views with all candor, and that I have formed those views with the utmost care, and without implicitly following the steps of any of the numerous expositors thereof, and consequently I shall not ask you implicitly to follow mine.

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## AN IMPORTANT QUESTION CONSIDERED.

I have several times anticipated the question, whether the Creator could not have accomplished all his proposed ends of benevolence, without subjecting us to those preliminary sufferings which form so considerable a part of our present allotment? "Was it not," we are frequently asked, "equally possible for him to have made us perfectly happy at once? and if so, must he not be wanting in goodness not to have done so?" It is not for us to say what the Almighty could or could not have done, in this case; it seems probable, however, that with every degree of imperfection in being, there must necessarily be a corresponding degree of imperfection in happiness: himself alone is infinitely perfect in nature, and, consequently, himself alone is infinitely perfect in felicity. If he could have made us as perfect, he could also have made us as happy, as himself: but then we could have known no progression in happiness; we could not have passed from this state to a better, from that to a better still, and so on, ad infinitum, as seems to be our destination under the present order of things. This is one view of the case which tolerably well solves the enigma of the existence of suffering, under the government of infinite love: but there is another.

We frequently hear the remark, that all our happiness is *comparative*, or that it arises from *contrast*—that we could not enjoy food if we never experienced hunger—nor drink, if we never knew thirst—nor rest, if we were strangers to fatigue, etc. This is a mistake, however ; *all* our pleasure is not relative, although *much* unquestionably is ; but our senses are so contrived as to be media of *positive* enjoyment to us. It is not essential to our appreciating the fragrance of the rose or violet, that we previously respire the sulphuretted hydrogen arising from soiled house-drains : the infant, it may be presumed, without previous experience, enjoys the food with which nature has so kindly furnished the mother for its sustenance. No, *all* our happiness does not result from contrast ; yet who can doubt that it is incalculably *increased* thereby ? A man who is born to affluence—whose whole existence has been spent in all the enjoyments which wealth could supply—who has never known the fatigues of labor, nor the gnawings of want—has but small zest for the pleasures which offer themselves ready culled to his hand ; but he becomes sick of satiety, and a prey to that stagnation of soul proceeding from the want of an object to engage its energies. But conceive a poor man, accustomed from his birth to severe drudgery, and the coarsest fare : or conceive the pampered son of wealth first supposed—let him be cast by accident upon an inhospitable coast—he must needs traverse a savage desert ere he can reach the abodes of civilized life—days and nights of want and suffering elapse during his toilsome journey—hunger, and thirst, and weariness, and burning heat, and dangers innumerable ;—he reaches the goal at length, is kindly received, furnished with all the luxuries of tropical existence—delightful groves overshadow him—breezes laden with aromatic incense fan his frame—the melody of birds regale his ear—and all that appetite—all that fancy can crave, is subject to his wish. Is argument needed, reader, to convince you that our traveler enjoys these luxuries with a more intense delight than, before he tasted of adversity, he ever experienced ?

That our enjoyment is incalculably enhanced by contrast, then, is past denial, and we hence obtain an idea of the probable use of our present suffering ; the bliss of eternity may be the more exquisite for the tears of time, and the happiness of each succeeding stage of our existence may be heightened by the deficiencies

of the stage preceding it; for I am far from thinking that we shall arrive at once, on our reaching heaven, at the acme of felicity, but we shall be progressing toward it, to eternity. From this reasoning, it seems probable that the bliss of an infant spirit (which has had little or no experience of suffering) is not so great on its first arrival in the abodes of bliss, as is that of the adult who has reached the haven after long struggling against the winds and tides of time.

By those who suppose our first parents to have been placed in a condition of perfect happiness before their fall, their case may seem a refutation of this theory concerning the utility of suffering; but I do not admit the premises. If the first pair had been completely happy ere they sinned, they could not have been tempted as they were; the very manner of the temptation proves their felicity to have been incomplete; their appetite coveted the interdicted fruit; this implied want, which they were forbidden to gratify, and ungratified want (however unreasonable that want in itself) is one of the ordinary elements of misery. They desired, too, to *be as Gods, knowing good and evil*, which clearly implied a discontent with the lot assigned them; they aspired to a higher sphere, and this is the essence of ambition. They experienced also a hunger of intellect, a desire to *know good and evil*, and this knowledge they supposed the tree would impart. It is therefore exceedingly clear that they were not absolutely happy, although more happy, undoubtedly, than subsequent to their fall.

“What can we reason, but from what we know?” the poet asks; and from all that we can know at present the probabilities seem decidedly against the supposition, that it is possible for Jehovah to create sentient creatures, who, from the commencement of their existence, shall be in possession of absolute and unmixed felicity; it seems a fair presumption, that, were it possible, his infinite goodness would have so created and circumstanced their’s, that to all eternity, all creatures should be utter strangers to want, or pain, or to any thing which would render their happiness incomplete; for benevolence cannot approve of misery for its *own* sake, although for the *end’s* sake it may; and if misery be not absolutely indispensable to the end, it cannot approve it at all, for the plain reason that it must always prefer to effect the *best ends* by the *best*

*means.*

Behold, then, fellow mortals, the use of the sufferings of which you at present complain! Let your souls be bowed in adoration and love before the throne of your Almighty Father, who permit-teth no evil to come upon you but such as he sees will turn out for your greatest good in the end.

“God nothing does, nor suffers to be done,  
But what ourselves would do, if we could see  
The end of all events as well as he.”

Give not place to impatience, then, nor to profitless repining under affliction. Call not his wisdom, nor his justice, nor his love, into question, as though the sorrows or disappointments you experience were supernumerary; not one of them is such—each hath its own assigned weight and bearing on the great and glorious issue.

“His purposes will ripen fast,  
Unfolding every hour;  
The bud may have a bitter taste,  
But sweet will be the flower.”

And you, afflicted fellow pilgrim through a world of sin, who have been oft and deeply stricken with the shafts of sorrow, most welcome are you to a share in the comfort with which this doctrine is fraught; and if you find the remedy herein for which your heart is seeking, I give you joy of your discovery, and shall feel most thankful if my instrumentality have led to it.

“Peace to thee, mourner, coming years  
Will give thee joy instead of tears.”

For myself, if the reader will pardon the egotism, I will say, that the light of this theory is the most placid and cheering which can be brought to shine upon the pathway of my life; in it my heart can most cheerfully bask when the darkness of disappointment is settling upon all its earthly hopes. Courage! courage, my soul! Thou art clad with a panoply which makes thee invulnerable to the shafts of despair—thou mayst sow in tears awhile, but anon thou shalt reap a plentiful harvest of joy.

Past my fleeting term of sorrow,  
Then shall my life's sun decline,  
But 'twill rise in joy to-morrow,  
And in cloudless regions shine.



## DIFFERENT VIEWS AMONG UNIVERSALISTS.

Our opponents are apt to reproach us on account of the diversity of forms in which our doctrine has been held by different classes of universalists ; but if this circumstance makes against its truth, what shall we say of christianity itself, which has existed under a thousand variant modifications ? True it is, that in nearly all ages of the church, men of eminent learning and piety have discovered, that the bible most clearly teaches the final salvation of all mankind, and having found this, they have employed their ingenuity in devising modes, by which they could harmonize it with their peculiar notions of the atonement. It is thus that hypothetical theories have been formed, in order to account for obvious bible facts.

Origen, so distinguished a luminary of the church in the third century, and many after him, whose minds were bewildered with the Platonic mysticism of a triplicated deity, and who supposed that as sin is directed against an infinite Being, it is therefore infinite, and being infinite, it must merit an infinitude of punishment—these, I say, sought out a method by which the damned may be restored, consonantly with these (as they supposed them) fundamental principles ; but this is not to take place until long ages of suffering have been endured, and that of the most terrible kind. This scheme, in our country, is usually termed Winchesterian, from an eminently amiable and gifted divine, (formerly of the Calvinistic baptist communion,) who was indefatigable in its promulgation, both in England and America.

The learned and venerable Tillotson, a prelate of the English church, took a different view from the preceding ; he supposed endless suffering to be actually threatened in the bible, but as universal salvation is also most clearly taught therein, he accounted for the paradox by supposing, that the former is not designed to be *inflicted*, but only to act as a means of terrifying and reforming wicked men : he cites the case of Jonah's denunciation against Ninevah as an illustration of his hypothesis. " Yet forty days, and Ninevah shall be overthrown." (iii. 4.) But the menaced calamity was averted by the repentance of the inhabitants, and as

this result could not but have been foreseen, the learned prelate supposes that Jehovah merely employed the threatening for that especial end.

Mr. Huntington, a very celebrated congregational clergyman, of Connecticut, advocated universal salvation on Calvinistic principles: he supposed that Christ, as the federal head of all mankind, offered himself, and was accepted by divine justice, as their substitute; and, therefore, that all the denunciations of the divine law against sin were executed upon Christ in the sinner's stead. Divine justice being thus fully satisfied, has no further claim upon men, and grace can accomplish its benevolent purpose in rescuing them from the dominion of sin and death, and exalting them to a glory and felicity far surpassing that from which they fell. In this way as sin hath abounded, grace shall much more abound.

Mr. Huntington's views, which were drawn up and vindicated by himself with much copiousness and ability, were published after his death (agreeably to an injunction in his will) under the title of "CALVINISM IMPROVED." In the preface to the work, he states, that he had entertained these sentiments for fourteen years; but as a congregational minister (although he had advanced nothing expressly contrary thereto in all that time) he had deemed it prudent to abstain from an open avowal of them. Such were the bigotry and intolerance of the times!

Somewhat similar to this scheme is that of Mr. Relly, of London: he supposed an indissoluble union to subsist between Christ and the human family, in consequence of which, they are esteemed righteous for his sake, and he guilty for their's; they are adorned and beautified with his grace and purity, and he is abased and degraded for their sins, until infinite justice is satisfied, and both shall then be perfected and blessed forevermore. Mr. Relly's doctrine was the form of universalism advocated by John Murray, the earliest universalist preacher in America—a man of undoubted genius and lively turn of mind, whose biography is singularly eventful and instructive.

With the peculiar views of the universalists of Germany, I am not acquainted; they exist in such number that an American orthodox divine (President Dwight of Yale College) who visited the country, reports that he fell in with but one learned man who professed a belief in the eternity of hell torments, and even he was

not quite clear that the bible taught the doctrine ! But as to the particular form (or, for aught I know, *forms*,) in which the ultimate restitution of all men is held in Germany, I cannot assert with any confidence ; the divine before referred to affirms, that they maintain it on philosophical rather than scriptural grounds. Nevertheless, his testimony concerning the general rectitude of their character, and the extent and depth of their erudition; is in a very high degree honorable to them. He concedes also, that their attainments in biblical literature very considerably exceed those of the theologians in all other parts of christendom ; and the same, I believe, is conceded by every body entitled to a judgment about it.

I know of but two classes of believers in universal salvation at the present day—one of which, for distinction sake, are termed restorationists ; their belief is, that impenitent persons shall be punished in the future state, and that their punishment shall be proportioned, in duration and intensity, to the degrees of turpitude in the parties. They mostly agree that this suffering will be moral in its nature, not physical—and they consequently reject the notion of a local hell. They hold punishment to be corrective and disciplinary, and that it will infallibly, eventuate in the good of the subjects ; yet, they do not maintain (as their opposers are apt to report) that the damned are to be saved by virtue of these penal inflictions, but, on the contrary, they hold salvation to be of grace, a free gift, and therefore, exclusive of both works and sufferings.

The other class (usually termed *modern*, and by some, reproachfully, *ultra* universalists,) maintain that all the punishment for sin is experienced in this life ; for an infinitely benevolent Being (they affirm) can have no motive for punishing, aside from amending the subject, or deterring others from sinning, and for neither of these objects can it be necessary to prolong the punishment beyond the term of our present existence : for the history of some of the deepest offenders proves (as they think) that long periods of penal suffering cannot be required for subduing the sinner, (as their brethren of the Winchesterian or restorationist order seem to suppose.) Mary Magdalene, out of whom seven evil spirits were cast, and whose sins are emphatically said to have been *many* was nevertheless subdued within the term of her mortal life, and

brought to wash the Savior's feet with her penitential tears. But a look from Jesus was sufficient to cause Peter, whilst in the act of denying him with cursing, to go out and weep *bitterly*.—There is ground for believing that even the traitor Judas broke his heart with poignant sorrow for the betrayal of his master. "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest," was all that the persecuting zealot, Saul, needed to soften him down into a disposition to inquire, "Lord, what would'st thou have me to do?" Ages of suffering were not required for the subdual of the expiring thief, etc. These, and numerous kindred cases, sufficiently establish the fact, that the manifestations of divine goodness to the minds of sinners are all-powerful in conquering their enmity, and engaging their affections; and that for this object but a little time is necessary.

Amongst modern universalists there are those, who think that although there will be no positive suffering for sin endured in eternity, yet that the sinner will, on account of his wickedness in time, sustain an eternal loss; for we are progressive beings, (say they,) and it is not reasonable that those who, in this life, have neglected the improvement of their moral nature, should, in eternity, be admitted to equal happiness, or advanced to equal excellence with those who have: to expect this (they affirm) is to expect in contrariety to present experience, for all moral attainment among men is the result of effort—of guarding and striving against our evil propensities, and sedulously cultivating those habits and principles which form the basis of virtuous character. In the spiritual state, therefore, (they contend) although we are fully warranted in the belief that all will be brought to a knowledge and enjoyment of God, yet this no more implies that all shall be exalted and felicitated in an equal degree, than the fact that some are here brought to know and enjoy God proves that they are equal in purity and felicity to the angels of heaven. The following comparison will afford some illustration of their views on this head.

James and William were brothers; their father, being on the eve of a long absence from home, divided his estate equally between them, telling them that on their faithful improvement of their respective shares during his absence, their well-being should entirely depend; but that on his return he would bestow upon each a sum of money that should be an ample competency for

them during the residue of their lives: this was to be a free donation, and irrespective of their merits or demerits. Well, James went to work upon his portion of the estate, determined to advance it to the highest degree of improvement. William, on the contrary, was indolent, neglectful of his affairs, and his portion of the property got into disorder and dilapidation. On the father's return, at the end of ten years, he found James to be already in wealthy circumstances in consequence of his industry and sobriety; whilst William, poor fellow! was in rags, and in debt, presenting a picture of squalid poverty. This posture of things, however, did not prevent the fulfilling of his original intentions, and he accordingly presented each of his sons the sum of twenty thousand dollars. James remonstrated, urging that as he was the more deserving by his good conduct, he was entitled to a larger sum than William, who, indeed, was not deserving of any, having been so improvident for himself, and so prodigal of what he had already received. "But remember, my son," replied the father, "that the money I am now bestowing is not given on the ground of *reward*, but of *grace* exclusively. Shall I prove evil to William, poor fellow! because he has been evil to himself? Have not his indolence and prodigality already sufficiently punished him during the past ten years? He has suffered from want—from the embarrassments of debt—from innumerable mortifications and humiliations—whilst, on the other hand, have you not enjoyed plenty, and ease, and honor, and self-approval? And even now, although I give to him an equal sum as to yourself, yet see you not that you are fully as much in advance of him in your circumstances as before? for you have your portion of the estate I gave you on leaving, highly improved, and capable of itself of yielding you a handsome maintenance; whereas, William's portion is not in a condition to yield him anything!"

In this comparison, the soul, or moral nature of man, is considered as an estate left to his cultivation and care by his heavenly Father, who is supposed to be absent. On man's management of this estate entirely depends his present moral enjoyment; if neglected, it will soon be overrun with the weeds of error and sin, and instead of bearing the fruits of peace, joy, hope, love, etc., it will produce the thorns and briars of remorse, misery, and despair. But in his infinite goodness, God has promised immortal life, and

a subduing and reconciling view of his glory, to the whole human race, so that all shall bow to him—be blessed in Christ—and become the willing subjects of his government. These blessings are not promised as an equivalent for works performed on our part, nor for qualities attained, but as *a free gift*. Still, this does not imply that all are to be blessed in an equal degree, or (to carry out the figure) that their several estates are to be brought to a like degree of advancement; but on the contrary, it is supposed, that those in which the christian graces have been longer and more assiduously cultivated, will be in a condition to yield them in greater abundance and perfection.

Those who take this view, hold it not as a mere speculation, but (as they suppose) on scriptural warrant; for Paul (say they) clearly recognises a diversity of orders among the subjects of the resurrection. I believe that this view obtains very generally amongst the unitarians of this country, and the author will confess, it is that to which his own judgment the most strongly inclines. The only objection (so far as I know) to which it is liable, is, that it represents Jehovah as *partial* in making some of his creatures to be eternally superior to others. But, then, it is admitted that some are actually made superior to others in time—superior in person, intellect, fortune, and moral qualities. It is also admitted that there are angelic beings who were made superior to man. Why do not these facts as well form a ground of impeachment against the impartiality of God, as the other? Truth is, that grades in the order of being is one of the most beautiful arrangements in the economy of creation, and especially when we consider that these several orders are not doomed to remain eternally stationary, but are destined to progress toward the infinite centre of perfection forever.

This view, it seems to me, if it is not directly asserted, is at least countenanced by the sacred writers: what else means Paul when he speaks of some who were tortured for the truth's sake, "not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain *a better resurrection*?" (Heb. xi. 35.) And what means he also in the following passage? "There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one

star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead." (1 Cor. xv. 40, 41.) The christian course, moreover, is compared to a race, a wrestle, and other exercises usual in the Olympic games, in which a prize was held out to stimulate exertion. And Paul speaks of himself as pressing toward the mark of his high calling in Christ Jesus. At the close of his treatise on the resurrection, moreover, he exhorts his Corinthian brethren, *in view of that event*, to be "steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord;" and this, too, from a knowledge on their part (grounded on the consoling facts he had adduced in his letter) that their labor was "not in vain in the Lord."

The above are all the modifications of the universalist faith with which I am acquainted; they display a diversity as to the *mode* merely, not as to the *main principle* of that doctrine: there are few universalists who care greatly as to the particular form in which others hold their doctrine—their chief concern is about the essential fact, the ultimate bringing in of all the human race, and this in God's own way, they care not how—and in God's own time, they care not when; their entire confidence in the unbounded wisdom and goodness of the Creator, inspires them with a disposition most cheerfully to acquiesce beforehand in his disposition of the matter, without doubting that he will do all things for the best end, and in the best manner.

But supposing the diversity of forms in which the universalist faith is held, to be much greater than it is—what then? Is the fundamental fact the less to be believed, because there are differences of opinion as to the mode of it? And would the advocates of endless misery have us believe that there is less diversity concerning that tenet? It would seem so, certainly, from the way in which they are wont to taunt us on this ground. But let us see how the fact stands. Some believe in endless damnation on the ground of the divine decrees—some on the ground of an abuse of our free powers—some say that our sins here are of infinite turpitude, and justify God in damning us to eternity—some say that we are not to be eternally damned for the sins of this life, but that sin has a self-perpetuating power, and our punishment will be endless because our sin will be so. Some say that our damnation will consist of a literal burning in hell—some, that it will be con-

stituted of remorse, and an absence of the divine goodness—some affirm that we shall be damned if found out of the faith and communion of the true church—some, that in whatever faith or church we are found, or whether in none at all, if we improve aright such opportunities as have been afforded us, it will go well with us, but if otherwise we shall be damned for the nonimprovement—some maintain that the neglecting to secure the new birth will be the ground of our damnation; and some, that we must be baptized or be damned, whatever else we may do or leave undone, etc., etc.

Universalists, however, do not contend against each other on account of their diversity of views; and this is much more than can be said of the believers in endless torments: the former, indeed, have no motives for contention—the latter have very weighty ones; for if the interests of the immortal state are in any degree dependant upon a correct faith in this world, we should doubtless strive with all our might to save men from their heresies, at whatever expense to their earthly peace or interests; hence this doctrine fully justifies persecution for opinion's sake, but universalism does not; for it does not represent God in the character of a holy inquisitor, tormenting his short-sighted creatures in everlasting flames, because of their misfortune in failing to find and believe the truth. True it is, that universalists deem the acquisition of truth to be of great importance to men for their present benefit, and hence they endeavor to gain them over to embrace and enjoy it; but as this motive for zeal in the propagation of their faith is based upon a desire to extend the bounds of human happiness, it would ill comport with that motive to quarrel with men because they were not of their opinion in religion.



## AN INTERMEDIATE STATE CONSIDERED.

To human wisdom, relative to the state immediately subsequent to death, very narrow limits are assigned; and the paucity of information upon this point in the sacred writings, sufficiently proves that they were not given for our enlightenment in regard to it. From many portions of the Old Testament it might be inferred, that a future sentient existence was not at all believed in by the writers. Solomon saith, "For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun." (Eccles. ix. 5, 6.) And again he says, in the tenth verse of the same chapter, that there is no knowledge in *sheol* (the separate state) whither we are going. Hezekiah says, "Death cannot celebrate thee; they that go down into *sheol* cannot hope for thy truth." (Isa. xxxviii. 18.) In the following language from Job, there is an evident vacillation of mind betwixt hope and doubt relative to a future being. "For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease. Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground; yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant. But man dieth, and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up; so man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep. If a man die, shall he live again? All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thy hands." (Job xiv. 7—12, 14, 15.) Nothing was ever better conveyed than is the alternation of hope and doubt in the mind of the speaker, relative to the important topic of which he speaks.

From the reluctance, too, with which death was contemplated in Old Testament times, it seems fairly inferrible, that a state of felicity *immediately* subsequent thereto was not expected. When

it was announced to the good Hezekiah that he was to die, he received the announcement with extreme sorrow, and humbled himself before God in prayer for a continuance of his life. In numerous instances, too, we find, that length of days is promised as a reward of a virtuous course of conduct. Both Moses and Aaron had their mortal lives abridged, as a punishment for certain specified acts of disobedience. These facts seem to imply very clearly, that it was not in those days believed, that death occasioned an immediate transit from earth to heaven.

Nor does the New Testament, as I think, afford much clearer ground of faith upon this point. I know that certain texts can be adduced, which, considered by themselves, would favor the notion that men pass at death from earth to immediate felicity; but then I also know, that the weight of these is countervailed by other texts, and a legitimate deduction from certain scriptural facts.—As, then, we can have no possible interest in being deceived on this head, let us briefly, yet candidly, take a view of what may be said on both sides.

Christ's words to the dying thief afford, perhaps, the strongest argument in favor of the notion of immediate post-mortem happiness. "To-day, shalt thou be with me in paradise." (Luke xxiii. 43.) But it is usual to take quite too much for granted in the popular application of this case, viz., that the thief had a true faith in Christ's messiahship—that he was convicted, and repented of, his sins—that, when he begged to be remembered of Christ when he came into his kingdom, he had reference to Christ's coming in the final judgement—and that Christ's answer implied, that he should be with him that day in heaven. Now to my mind there is very great improbability in each of these items; and since they are taken on sheer assumption, I will offset against them the following, which, at least, may be supported by a better show of reason, viz: That the confession of guilt which the thief made, had only respect to the crime for which he suffered, not his sin against God—that his notions of the Messiah being Jewish, he expected him to come and establish a temporal dynasty, and to this he had reference in his petition—that Christ's answer was designed to call off his attention from such expectations, and direct it to the fact, that he should that day be with himself in the separate state. Such is my judgement of this case, and here are the reasons for it.

Christ's own apostles had not correct ideas, at that time, of the nature of the kingdom he came to establish; for, only the night previous, they had contended among themselves as to which should be the greatest under his reign; which proves that their notions on this subject were Jewish, and it is irrational to suppose that the thief had more correct notions about it than they who had listened to Christ's instruction for years! But again. When was Messiah to come in his kingdom? Not surely at the close of time; for then it is that he is to "deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father." Christ came in his kingdom spiritually (and in no other sense was he to come) when, at the close of the Jewish dispensation, he established his church in the world. It will hence be seen, that the thief could not have had the evangelical faith in Christ which the popular application of the subject supposes. Moreover, the Savior went at death to the *separate state*, or *hades*, and not to heaven. See how Peter speaks to this point. "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he, seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption." (Acts ii. 29—31.)

Another passage which seems to favor the idea of immediate happiness after death, is that which describes Christ's transfiguration. "And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias; who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem." (Luke ix. 30, 31.) If Moses and Elias were translated to immediate felicity, it may be argued that such may be the case with all righteous persons at their decease. There is a real difficulty in this case, which I by no means feel disposed to overleap, (as others have done,) by assuming, that the whole affair was a mere vision. I would rather suppose that, as the transfiguration of Christ was but of temporary duration, and evidently miraculous in its nature, so the appearance and felicitous existence of Moses and Elias may also have been out of the ordinary course of things, and for only the time being. Who, for instance, would

argue from the following fact, which took place at the Savior's last groan, that the same kind of a resurrection is constantly going on? "And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." (Matt. xxvii. 52, 53.) Here was a rising *from the graves*, but whether the risen remained alive, or returned almost immediately to their quiescent state, we are not informed; but I suppose the latter, as nothing is subsequently said of them.

Again, Paul intimates that to be absent from the body, is to be "present with the Lord;" it is, (he says,) to "be with Christ, which is far better:" and hence he conceived, that "to die, is gain." Stephen, also, commended his parting spirit to the Lord Jesus—as Jesus himself did his into the hands of his Father.—These, on the face of them, seem decidedly to favor the notion of felicity immediately subsequent to death. I have no wish to force upon them a different signification; nor to do anything with them which would abstract from their natural weight in this discussion. Let them stand, then, as we find them.

The following passage is also supposed to convey an argument favoring the same side of the question. "Now, that the dead are raised, even Moses showed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him." (Luke xx. 37, 38.) The argument couched in this passage is, that as "God is not the God of the dead," and yet terms himself "the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob," who at the time had no existence on the earth, it therefore follows that they must have had a sentient existence somewhere; and if they, then the rest of the dead also, "for all live unto God." The usual reply to this is, (at least I suppose it is, for I have seen but little on the subject,) that since all are destined to be raised in God's own time, and all duration, with all its events and existences, is present to his mind, persons may be said to live unto him, who either have not yet come on to the stage of actual being, or have passed off of it: for Jehovah "speaks of things that be not, as though they were."

I, however, take a different view from the preceding; I believe that man is in possession of an undying essence, usually called

his soul, or his spirit, (I am not over particular as to its name,) which came from God, and is destined to return to him.—“There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.” (Job xxxii. 8.) God is called the “Father of spirits.” (Heb. xii. 9.) And Paul speaks of “the spirits of just men, made perfect.” (Ibid. 23.) Angels are said to be “ministering spirits.” (Ibid. i. 14.) And Christ says of little children, “their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.” (Matt. xviii. 10.) From which I can make out nothing intelligible, except it be, that we have a heavenly essence within us which is not confinable within the narrow limits prescribed to mortal nature, but is privileged to hold communion with God and heavenly things. And who is there that has not felt, with a force which no language can convey, that this is the case? When Christ arose, and appeared to his disciples, they supposed the appearance before them to be a spirit; and Christ informed them concerning a spirit, negatively. “A spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have.” (Luke xxiv. 37—39.) And it is worthy of remark, that, even after the apostles had been more fully instructed in gospel truth, when Peter (after being miraculously delivered out of prison) appeared at the house of Mary, where many were convened in prayer, they could not at first credit the damsel’s report, that Peter was at the door; but, thinking him to have been put to death, they supposed that it was his angel that the woman had seen. (Acts xii. 15.) In short, I have no fellowship in the doctrine that man is a mere animal—merely distinguished from other animals by a superior organization, and whose entire existence after death depends on a renovation of his physical nature, or, in other words, on a resurrection of his body. Neither, at the same time, do I believe that disembodied spirits enter at once into a condition of positive enjoyment—and the following are among my reasons for not so believing.

The widow of Nain’s son, Jarus’s daughter, and Lazarus, (the brother of Mary and Martha,) were raised to life by the Savior previous to his own death and resurrection. These (on the hypothesis I am opposing) had gone to heaven or to hell, (supposing the existence of a post-mortem hell.) If to the latter, there is then a redemption from hell. If to the former, was there mercy in calling them from a state of positive bliss, to one of perpetual liability

to suffering? Besides, Christ is called "the first fruits of them that slept"—"the first born from the dead"—and "our forerunner" into the holy place. How could he be with propriety so termed, if others had passed through death to the happiness of heaven before him? Moreover, Peter, when preaching to the Jews on the day of Pentecost, positively asserts, "for David is not ascended into the heavens." (Acts ii. 34.) And if David had not, it is presumable that others had not also.

It must be remarked, that the declaration concerning David was made subsequent to Christ's resurrection. I notice this, because there are those who think, that although previous to that event the dead were kept in a negative state as to enjoyment, yet, when "Christ our forerunner" had "entered into the holy place," the whole congregation of the dead were admitted also. In further opposition to this notion, it must be remarked, that dead persons were also recalled to life by the apostles after Christ's ascension, and therefore, (as remarked concerning those raised by the Savior) they were recalled from a world of bliss to a world of tears—an act, methinks, which neither Christ nor his apostles would have consented to perform. I am at a loss, too, on this hypothesis, to account for the following language: "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now: and not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the spirit; even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." (Rom. viii. 22, 23.) The sense on the face of this text seems most clearly to be, that the final redemption of the entire body of humanity, must first take place, before any of the members thereof could enjoy the happiness in reversion for them—a sentiment (as I have elsewhere observed) fraught with beauty and benevolence. And in the following passage, which refers to the ancient worthies who had suffered persecution and death for the cause of truth, the same idea seems to be conveyed. "And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." (Heb. xi. 39, 40.)

It may farther be urged against the doctrine of immediate happiness after death, that if it be true, the necessity of a resurrection is entirely superseded, except (as many think, the society of

Friends included) that the resurrection succeeds instantly to the dissolution of the body; and in that case death (as the Swedenborgians say) is nothing more than a change in the mode of being; if which be true, the sacred writers have employed language on the subject most strangely at variance with the idea they meant to convey. Paul assuredly speaks of a rising again of the same body which is laid in the grave. "So also is the resurrection of the dead: it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." (1 Cor. xv. 42—44.) He also speaks of the resurrection of the body under the figure of grain springing up from seed sown into the ground; in which case it is not wholly the identical seed that springs up, but the germ of it merely, between which and a certain portion of the earth and other elements, there are chymical affinities, from which result those new combinations, which in form and substance resemble the original seed.

To me, then, three things seem to be clearly taught in the scriptures: first, that the spirit of man has some sort of an existence separate from the body: second, that it is not one of positive bliss: and third, that there is to be a resurrection, in which all shall be morally subjected to God, and consequently happy.

To assume, as many do, that, because now we are mainly (if not altogether, which is doubtful,) dependant on our bodily organs for our mental operations, we therefore must necessarily lose all consciousness when we are separated from the body, is, in my judgement, to assume very far beyond the warrant of reason. "God is a spirit." Is *he* also dependant on bodily functions for his consciousness? If not, the assumption is as well against *fact* as reason, (allowing the divine existence to be a matter of fact.) It is against reason, because, from what is possible to us in our present mode of being, it is unreasonable and presumptuous to infer with confidence, as to what is or is not possible to every conceivable mode of being. It were full as sensible, and as modest, to assume, that because the mathematical problems in Euclid are utterly beyond the comprehension of the child, they will therefore be equally unintelligible to the man. I am sick of that hypercritical scepticism which is ever directing its vulture

glance to the spying out of difficulties in every thing proposed to its faith, and rejecting with self-complacent decisiveness all that comes not within the narrow compass of its apprehension.

After what I have said of the indeterminate posture in which the subject before us is left by the sacred writers, it must not be expected of me to be wiser than they in regard to it, for I frankly confess it to be a topic on which I can affirm nothing, except conjecturally.

“The vast, the unbounded prospect lies before me,  
But shadows, clouds, and darkness, rest upon it,”

until I extend my inquiries to the era of the resurrection; then all is clearness and sunshine; for of it the scriptures most clearly speak as an era of triumph—of complete and glorious triumph—over every foe, and for eternity.

In our bodily state, we are the subjects of two classes of sensations; the one class we term *moral*, the other *animal*; the former come from the exercise of our souls, or moral powers—from reflection, or the contemplation of abstract things. Our animal sensations come to us directly by the media of the senses, and are strictly confined to material or sensible objects; these it cannot rationally be expected, will continue to be experienced when the spirit is dislodged from its earthly tabernacle. But why may not the spirit continue a subject of *moral* sensation? Why may it not experience regret at what it may have lost by past non-improvement? and remorse for the guilt it may have contracted by past crimes? I know of no reason in the world why it may not: and therefore, although I find no express warrant in the scriptures for affirming positively that punishment does extend beyond the dissolution of the body, yet, as I also find no express warrant for positively affirming the contrary, I may at least assert, that the former is neither absolutely impossible nor unreasonable.

I think it would be no detriment to us universalists to be more modest in taking ground relative to the separate state; or if we must assume positively in regard to it, let it at least be on some express authority, either scriptural or philosophical. It cannot be doubted that some texts look somewhat strongly toward the idea, that our doings in time have some sort of bearing upon our condition beyond it. Do not suspect me, reader, of being about to involve the bible in self-contradiction, by assuming that



it teaches salvation by works, or by faith, or any thing else, independently of the grace of God. I purpose no such thing: but, as I have said, some texts *do* look toward the idea, that our doings here will somehow affect our condition hereafter. Christ himself endured the cross and despised the shame, *for the joy that was set before him*. (Heb. xii. 2.) Paul conceived *a crown to be laid up for him* as a consequence of his having fought the good fight and kept the faith. (2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.) And Paul and his brethren labored, that whether present with the Lord out of the body, or absent from him in it, they *might be accepted of him*. (2 Cor. v. 9.) In the Revelation we are told, those who die in the Lord *are blessed*—"for they rest from their labors, and their *works do follow them*." (xiv. 13.) I affirm not positively that these, and like texts, are *unequivocally* relevant to the point in hand; but they so look toward it, that except a different meaning can be found for them, which shall be as obviously in agreement with their phraseology, we should at least be less positive in assuming that there is no punishment for sin of any kind after death.

In the resurrection we are to have *spiritual bodies*, by which is no doubt to be understood that the physical nature with which our spirits will be clothed in that state, will be refined and sublimated beyond any thing within the range of our present conceptions, and will be a medium to us of a very high degree of enjoyment, of a *physical* or *sensible* kind. "There are bodies celestial," says Paul, "and bodies terrestrial;" the former undoubtedly transcending the latter in glory, by as much as the heavens transcend the earth. At this era, it would seem, we are again to become the subjects of the two classes of sensations (moral and sensible) afore-mentioned; and in this probably consists a main difference betwixt the intermediate and the resurrection state; the former being a condition of the spirit in which it is unembodied, and therefore, unfurnished with sensorial media—consequently its enjoyment or suffering must be strictly abstract or moral in its nature.

As to our condition in the risen state, we have reason to believe that it will be one of unspeakable glory; "we shall bear the image of the heavenly"—"we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." It may be, as the ingenious Paley suggests, that the bodies we shall then possess shall be furnished with new and

additional senses, of which we cannot now conceive the use, but which shall prove the media of new and hitherto unconceived sensations of delight; and to all the enjoyment derivable from this source will be added all that shall arise from a renovation of our moral faculties—resplendent in the light of the divine approval—clothed with the reflected glory of his perfections—and rejoicing in an entire and for ever emancipation from sin and sorrow, and a prospective perpetuity of bliss upon bliss to eternity.

Nevertheless, as “one star differeth from another star in glory, so also is the resurrection of the dead.” It seems anything but reasonable to suppose that there will be no difference at that era betwixt Paul (for example) and the individual who passed from time without having taken the first step in moral advancement. I mean not by this, that the former merits a higher order of bliss—for the bliss of heaven is not to be conferred on such ground—but I mean that it would be an utter departure from the uniform course of things under God’s moral government. We here experience that *effort* is the price of all attainment, both moral and intellectual—that all advancement, as well as retrogression, is progressive—and that our souls (like gardens in nature) cannot be got into a condition of yielding the fruits of the spirit in any great degree of excellency or abundance, without sedulous and persevering cultivation. These things we know to be the case at present, and we have no reason for supposing they will be different with us when we enter upon a new stage of existence.

The above, reader, is all that I can propose for your faith on this dim subject; if you wish for more particular and authoritative information about it, why, doubtless, it is to be had very cheaply of certain persons, who dogmatize with most positiveness in matters of which they are least informed. The wise man is content with saying, that when the body shall return to the dust as it was, the spirit shall return to the God who gave it—further concerning it he pretendeth to know nothing: but a modern poet (more enlightened) informs us, that

“To heaven it flies, not there to dwell,  
But hear its doom, and sink to hell.”

A piece of poetry, this, which I have oft heard sung in the churches, but have never been able to find in the writings of Peter or Paul.

It quite sufficeth me to be wise concerning these matters within scripture warrant ; and especially as I have no particular anxieties about it, from a consideration that “ whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord’s ;” and being his, his wisdom and goodness will see to our being properly taken care of. I therefore close this essay as I begun it, by remarking, that to human wisdom, relative to the state immediately subsequent to death, very narrow limits are assigned.

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### THE BETTER WORLD.

There’s a region above  
Free from sin and temptation,  
And a mansion of love  
For each child of creation.  
Then dismiss all thy fears,  
Weary pilgrim of sorrow—  
Though thy sun set in tears,  
’Twill rise brighter to-morrow.

There our toils shall be done,  
And free grace be our story ;  
God himself is its sun  
And its unsetting glory.  
In that world of delight,  
Spring shall never be ended ;  
Nor shall shadows nor night  
With its brightness be blended.

There shall friends no more part,  
Nor shall farewells be spoken ;  
There’ll be balm for the heart  
That with anguish was broken.  
From affliction set free,  
And from God ne’er to sever ;  
We his glory shall see,  
And enjoy him forever.



# REVELATIONS FROM HELL

BY A DAMNED SPIRIT.

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## CHAPTER I.

Is it not most indubitable, gentle reader, that the staid and comfortable looking personage before us is one who is well to do in the world ? for see with what an air of sober dignity he bestrides that sleek brown gelding ! and see, too, with what self-complacency he taps his polished boot with the lash of his silver-mounted riding whip ! And does not the slow-and-easy jog at which he ambles along bespeak him a man who is under no necessity in the world for being in a hurry ? Nor is he ; for elder Triptolemus Tub is a gentleman of substance, in whatever sense you take the term ; killed and weighed, he would put to shame the best hog on his plantation. His dwelling is a massive one of stone, on the Virginia shore of the Ohio river ; his farm is the sort of rich flat land which Dutchmen are wont to covet ; his harvests usually well supply his barn and crib, nor are his coop and pen less well replenished ; his good dame lays in her snuff by the pound, and does nothing the live-long day but superintend the feeding of her pigs and poultry ; and why should Mrs. Dorothy Tub do more ? seeing she has at her beck and bidding some half a score of blackballs, who can show as shining faces and as complete rows of ivory as can be shown by any body's blackballs within the limits of the " Old Dominion."

I will not assert that there is any thing particularly pretty or romantic in the situation of the elder's domicile, except there is prettiness or romance in a straight reach of river with naked banks ; a straight line of post-and-rail fence ; and a straight unshaded road between. There is an object of interest there, nevertheless, to arrest the steps of even the most indifferent passer-by ; for near the huge and naked trunk of an elm which leans over the water, and whose roots (on the side next the river) have been washed bare by the current, a square stone set into the ground, and projecting

some four feet above it, is found to bear the following rudely chiseled inscription :

SACRED

*To the memory of eighteen gallant men who  
fell on this spot in defence of the  
helpless women and children, of the early settlement,  
against a numerous party of ferocious  
Indians, on the 19th day of  
January, 1788.*

Here, if the old elm were still in the pride of its foliage, the traveler might be well content to stop under its shadow, and to rekindle the embers of his patriotism with the memories of by-gone days, the trials and hardships endured by the adventurous pioneers of the western wilderness. It is said that even through the thick plaits of fat which encase the heart of our elder, the interests of this hallowed spot occasionally find their way, and it may well be believed, since amongst the band of heroes thus briefly epitaphed, repose the ashes of his venerated father, Old Epaphroditus Tub.

Our friend Triptolemus keeps a store, and house of entertainment: too godly is he to postpone the watering of his whiskey, and the sanding of his sugar, until sabbath morning, before prayers; no, no, these matters are decently and piously attended to on the previous evening, for Mr. Tub is, in sooth, a *very* godly, and *moderately* honest man. There is a maxim in hackniéd use which adviseth, "Get along *honestly* if you can, if you cannot *honestly*, get along, *anyhow*." The elder deemed it not prudent to begin with this precept at the right end—he tried the *anyhow* first, opining that when he should get rich at that, he could better afford to practice honesty afterward: there is *spiritual* economy too in this arrangement, he thought, for in after life, when preparing for heaven by a repentance of past misdeeds, it will be found easier resisting the devil with a full pocket than with an empty one, and easier procuring clerical assistance into the bargain. Still, it must be confessed that there are numberless inconveniences attending the *anyhow* practice, among which not the least is, that habits are thereby formed which it will task all the prudence and piety of after years to overcome: even the godly Mr. Tub has experienced the truth of this—he came near being

turned out of church lately. (It is'nt right, I know, to be telling this to the *world's people*, but I do it for the sake of illustration.) It was ascertained that during the late protracted meeting in his parts, (at which, too, he professed to have attained such discoveries in religion as convinced him that his former hopes were groundless,) he had suffered the minister's horses, in his stable, to go unfed save with hay, and that scantily, for the space of eight days! His plea was, that as he had entertained them free of charge, there was no dishonesty in the case; but then it was decided that it was an act of cruelty to the animals, and of deception toward the owners, who would certainly have preferred that the horses should be fed at a charge, than that they should be starved gratis. However, as the church was weak in numbers and pecuniary means, it was concluded to overlook the elder's offence, as he on his part consented to double his subscription for his preacher—to become an abolitionist, and to allow his daughter, Kesiah Tub, to go about soliciting pious donations and dispensing tracts. Mr. Tub, therefore, was not only retained in the church, but also in his ecclesiastical dignity.

One all-redeeming quality hath elder Tub—one which will “cover the multitude of sins;” it is this—he is most orthodox in faith, and, above all, in the faith of endless damnation. “His own damnation?” No, no, dear reader, by no means, ha, ha, ha! Not his own—none but fools, or very nervous folks, believe in their own damnation. But Mr. Tub is quite sure that somebody will be damned; yet, as they are not to be of his own kith or kin, he takes the matter very comfortably, and even gets quite fat on it: his experience on this point is expressed in the following luscious verses:

Prais'd be the Lord, I pardon'd am,  
 My spouse, good soul, is pardon'd too.  
 We shall be saved through Christ the Lamb,  
 In spite of all that we can do.

Our offspring—six in number—all  
 (By pious parents sanctified,)  
 Are safe in grace, whate'er befall,  
 For who can Christ's elect divide?

For others, it is nought to me  
 Who shall be saved, or who be lost,  
 Since grace shall but exalted be,  
 And saints be blest at sinners' cost.

## CHAPTER II.

Elder Tub sat at the foot of the old elm, one moonlight evening, ruminating on the trials and dangers, which must have been encountered in life by the brave men, whose fate was registered on the rude stone near him ; an unwonted sensibility came over his heart on this theme, insomuch that his attention became abstracted from surrounding objects. "Noble, gallant fellows !" he ejaculated, "to tear yourselves from the haunts of secure and civilized existence, with all its conveniences and refinements, and to adventure with your wives and little ones into this, then dreadful, wilderness, infested with savage beasts, and more savage men ; where every want, every deprivation, every horrid form of suffering awaited you. How much our now smiling and populous country, and its now peaceful and happy inhabitants, owe to your enterprise and perseverance ! Yet here you lie, with nothing but this half obliterated tablet to tell that you ever lived, and to bear its record to the great and noble cause in which you died ! But never mind, my gallant hearts ! for if our country is unmindful of her benefactors, it is consoling to think that heaven"—— Here our soliloquist was interrupted by sounds proceeding from behind him, which resembled a suppressed giggle. "He, he, he, he !" The elder felt both his patriotism and his piety to be insulted by this ill-timed merriment, and, supposing it to have come from one of his blackballs, he doubled his fist with the meek purpose of knocking him down ; but on turning around—horror of horrors ! what was his astonishment and dismay ! for he beheld a——what shall I call it ? It seemed a man—or the shadow of a man—or a compound of man and shadow ! Mr. Tub felt his hat to rise, as if self-moved, from his head,

"And each particular hair to stand on end  
Like quills upon the fretful porcupine."

"Be composed, my good Mr. Tub," spake out the apparition. "You have nothing to fear from one who was a companion and intimate friend of your father, Epaphroditus Tub. Don't you remember Shadrach Paddle ? you were old enough to have known me in those days. Well, never mind ; we are all in hell now,



the whole mess of us—all the eighteen poor fellows whose bodies are mouldering under that stone are now subjects of the realm below. When I interrupted you, you were about to say, that though our country withholds from us the honors due to our achievements, heaven would reward our patriotism and self-devotion! He, he, he! This is what excited my mirth. Bravery, philanthropy, patriotism—these, and like virtues, go for nothing in heaven; all its favors are showered upon those who have been born again, and have shaped their opinions by a creed: and in the early days of this wilderness, you must know, we were innocent enough of overmuch intelligence on these subjects, and precious little time had we for attention to them at any rate. We are therefore all damned—every one of us—whilst Anthony Pimp, a rascal, who deserted our colony, with a half-dozen horses which he stole, and who, to obliterate the evidence of his infamy, sought to effect our entire destruction by guiding the Indians to our station at midnight—he, I say, is now in heaven, having got some curious kind of experience, and said over his prayers for some time before his death. Well, God is nowise particular about the *moral* qualities of his elect! You are aware, Mr. Tub, that your mother, and my poor wife, Dolly Paddle, were among the women tomahawked on the occasion. I found them both in hell upon my arrival, (a few hours after their's,) and was tolerably well content with my new quarters, hot as they were, when I found there my seventeen brave compatriots, and our murdered wives, besides a number of other gallant men from the bloody fields of Lexington and Bunker Hill. One soon feels at home anywhere in good society—and believe me, my dear Triptolemus, you dwellers in flesh and blood have no adequate conception of the excellence of the society of the world below."

Our friend, Mr. Tub, was utterly astounded at these disclosures; his astonishment, together with the familiar manner in which the goblin addressed him, and the near concern he had in the matters revealed, quite got the better of his fears, and emboldened him to hold converse with the dim and misty outline of a once human being then before him. There was such an air of probability, withal, about the matters communicated, that the thought of them caused a revulsion throughout his whole system. His poor old father and mother in hell! Alas! he had never before harbored a

thought to that effect—and yet, what more possible? since, as he well knew, they were destitute of those qualifications which are held indispensable to salvation, although possessed of many which rendered them useful and amiable on earth. Such was also the case in general with the hardy pioneers of the west—coarse in manners and in speech, and wholly ignorant of, and indifferent about, the mysteries of the christian faith; yet frank-hearted and hospitable, and reckless of hardship and danger, when responding to the calls of duty or humanity.

“Am I to believe, then, Mr. Paddle,” the elder took courage to inquire, “that you are really a damned spirit—and that my honored parents, together with the helpless women of the early settlement, who were massacred, and the gallant men who died in their defence, are in a like predicament as yourself?”

“Yes,” replied the goblin, “you are to believe this, and more—I announce to you that nineteen twentieths of those who achieved the liberties of your country—whose names and whose deeds are so eulogized in fourth of July orations—who have commanded your armies and your ships—who have poured forth their souls, in words that aroused the soul, in your senate—yea, who have occupied your presidential chair—such men, too, (I grant them to have been) as were never surpassed, perhaps never equalled: yet, I tell you in truth, that nineteen twentieths of them are damned! He, he, he! I have often laughed in the orator’s face (invisible to him) as dilating upon their splendid deeds, he has pointed to heaven as the place where these heroes are to receive the meed of their services in the cause of liberty and right! He, he, he! Does the orator think that in those days of strife, and danger, and blood, these gallant fellows took time to concern themselves about faith, and the new birth? Not much did old Putnam, I trow, nor Warren, nor Montgomery, nor Gates, nor Marion, nor old De Kalb, nor Green. And, to come to later times, who suspects that Lawrence, or Decatur, or Jefferson, or Monroe, or Franklin, were subjects of an evangelical faith, and of regeneration? And it has been asserted on high authority of even the great Washington, that although he gave a general and loose assent to the truth of christianity, yet he undoubtedly stopped short of the mystical degree of the new birth; and with all his unrivalled virtues I am sorry to announce——But you bite your lip, and manifest great im-

patience, my friend ; well, I will spare you then the pain that my disclosure might inflict. Nevertheless, I can assure you of one thing, viz. that hell contains a large majority of the most learned and brilliant men that have been born into the world, poets, orators, historians, legislators, patriots, warriors, statesmen, priests, and monarchs ; very many too in whose praise history is loud, and many, also, whose excellent moral precepts have formed the elements of the moral code for millions of mankind."

"Alas ! Mr. Paddle," interrupted our friend Triptolemus, in a tone of deep dejection, "I must needs admit that there seems to be much truth in the matters you reveal, and the more so as they correspond with a revelation made in the scriptures, viz., that 'not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called ;' and we see, indeed, that it is even so—but few, comparatively, of splendid genius or attainments, it is to be feared, concern themselves about securing an interest in heavenly bliss."

"You are right, my friend Triptolemus, quite right," rejoined the goblin, "and I will inform you how it happens, (for as you are of the *elect*, it is permitted you to be informed of these matters.) In all countries and ages, the priests (good souls !) have found it easy to impress upon unlettered and unreflecting men the wholesome truth, that the gates of heaven or hell will be opened to them in eternity, according as their actions have been good or bad in time. It has been found easy also to make the same classes believe, that good actions consist of prayers, and fasting, and a right faith, and a right experience, and pious alms, tract reading, attendance at church, etc., which all-important matters have been neglected by too many of bright genius and enlarged understanding, to the loss of their immortal souls ; for they have usually thought, that, as the infinite Being is above being personally benefited by their performances, they were serving him most acceptably when they served and blest mankind. And they have also generally persisted in the absurd notion that the great Jehovah is entirely too good and wise to have staked the interests of man for eternity on the precarious contingencies of time ! He, he, he ! They have thought better of their Creator than facts have warranted—they have robed his character in their highest conceptions of excellence—he, he !—by the light of the fires of hell they are enabled to correct these crude fallacies ; they there learn to com-

prehend the seeming paradox, that unbounded love can burn without pity, without end—and therefore, without other object than revenge—unnumbered myriads of helpless beings, who owe their existence to his creative power!

“Thus it has happened that the most brilliant, and (in the world’s estimation) the most excellent and exalted of mankind have, by the dim and deceptive light of philosophy, or the bewildering glare of genius, blundered their way down to the infernal pit; and they carried with them so many virtues and accomplishments, that, as I have said before, the world of woe can boast a most delectable society, and numerous are our occupations and amusements to divert our attention from the uncomfortable heat of the climate. Blind Homer, the father of song—Virgil, his most gifted disciple—the versatile Shakspeare—Horace, Ovid, Euripides, Juvenal, Dryden, Ben Johnson, Otway, Collins, Cowley, Rowe, and nearly the whole fraternity of bards, more especially those who have employed their poetic talent in the profane business of writing plays—these amuse us by reciting and explaining their old productions, or composing new ones. We have lectures on history, delivered by Herodotus, Tacitus, Xenophon, Sallust, Gibbon, Hume, Clarendon, and others. Socrates (who was damned for sacrificing a cock to Æsculapius, as his last act in life,) Cato, Solon, Pythagoras, Zeno, Diogenes, Aristotle, Athenagoras, and other heathen sages, edify us with their lessons in philosophy. We have also most splendid orations on law, politics, physic, the different branches of physical science, language, chymistry, and even divinity—for we are not without an ample complement of theological professors in hell. Our own Franklin lectures to us on economy, electricity, and other matters; and we have many noble fellows, of ancient and modern times, including Demosthenes, Cicero, Themistocles, Alcibiades, Hannible, Junius Brutus, and Marcus Brutus, (besides many who signed the declaration of your nation’s independence,) who devoted themselves, soul and body, to the interests of their respective countries, but neglected, alas for them! in the heat of their enlarged zeal in the cause of man, to commit their creeds, and obtain an orthodox faith and experience toward God”————

A slight noise here drew off the elder’s attention, for a moment, in an opposite direction, and on his resuming it, Mr. Shadrach

Paddle had disappeared—nothing was to be seen in the place he had occupied, but a faint line of mist! The elder rubbed his eyes, and strained his vision to the utmost, but to no effect; he began at length to doubt whether his senses had not been deceiving him as to the apparition he thought he had seen, and the conversation he supposed he had maintained with it! “However,” thought he, “if imagination has been deceiving my eyes and ears all this while, I am much obliged to it, nevertheless, for the wholesome facts it has brought home to my reflection, of which I have never seriously thought before. Gracious God! what selfish beings we are! How comfortably we can yield our faith to the dark and dreadful dogma of unending woe, without reflecting how nearly we ourselves must necessarily be concerned in its realities, (however secure our title to eternal bliss may be,) on account of friends and kindred, and numberless other of our fellow beings, whom, for their virtues, splendid parts, or noble exertions and sacrifices in the common cause of man, we have been taught to love and admire! I must not pursue this train of thought, though, or it will cause my carnal judgment to quarrel with my creed—so I must strive, with divine assistance, to forget what has passed, since, after all, it may be a mere temptation from the devil.”

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### CHAPTER III.

“Well, well! Dorothy Tub, my dear, this world we live in is a mighty large one! for the ‘Old Dominion’ of itself is a pretty big piece of ground: but, my stars! it makes a mighty little show on this map! Well, then, there’s Pennsylvania, which is nearly as large, and the Empire state, and Maryland, and Jersey, and all the eastern, all the western, and all the southern states, besides the vast tract of uninhabited country this side of the Rocky mountains, and all that lies beyond—and yet, there’s the country between our national territory and the polar circle, on the north, and Texas and Mexico, on the south—and when we have estimated all this, we have got less than a fifth part of the solid portion of our earth! Only think, Dorothy Tub!” Such were the profound speculations of our old friend Triptolemus, as, snugly seated in his elbow

chair one night, he was doubly occupied in toasting his feet by the fire, and in perusing a map of the globe. His spouse, Dorothy, sate (or did a few minutes before) in another easy chair, the fellow to that which contained the rotund person of the elder ; but on his looking up from his studies, in the expectation of a response to his ejaculations about the magnitude of the earth, her chair was evacuated—no Dorothy Tub was there—nor had the elder any right to expect her there, for I am sure she had been quite audibly complaining for some time, and predicting a change of weather, from the uneasy condition of her corns and *rheumatiz* ; but Mr. Tub had been too profoundly engaged to hear any of this, (a too common case with the *lords of creation*, when their loving *ribs* are detailing their aches and pains ;) so Mrs. Dorothy Tub finding no response from her husband touching these interesting matters, had betaken herself to her bed in a huff.

“ A monstrous big world ! ” exclaimed the elder, continuing his erudite cogitations ; “ it would take a long-lived man his whole life to walk over it, I guess, for there’s South America, and Africa, and Europe, and Australia, and the islands—and yet, with all these, full three fourths of the earth’s surface, I perceive, is covered with water. How vast a conception it requires, to embrace the idea of such magnitude ! Why, I ”——

Here the giggle of Shadrach Paddle interrupted his speculations, as upon a former occasion. “ He, he, he, he ! ” And upon the elder’s looking up, there sat that queer personage, most profanely ensconced in Mrs. Tub’s easy chair, and grinning in his face. “ He, he, he ! Your world, that you think so large, my good Triptolemus, is no bigger than a hazelnut as compared with hell ! ” exclaimed the goblin. “ Why, my dear fellow, a moment’s reflection will suffice to convince you of this fact ; for what is the earth’s population ? It is variously computed at from seven to twelve hundred millions. I will take ten hundred millions as a medial estimate ; this number of human beings is swept into eternity and renewed about every twenty-five years, and for all these heaven and hell are the only receptacles. And what proportion of these do you think hell receives ? I know right well, as I have been there for some time, and have paid some attention to its statistics ; but I will not ask you to take the answer on the faith of a damned spirit ; you shall have it on the faith of figures, within your own

power to compute. Of the ten hundred millions of human beings on the earth, but two hundred millions are comprised within christendom ; of these, you must be aware, not more than one sixteenth part are saved—for you must be convinced, from a survey of society around you, that not more than one out of sixteen are experimentally and savingly christians. One sixteenth part of two hundred millions is twelve and a half millions ; and this (on the most liberal allowance) is the proportion of nominal christians saved each twenty-five years, and one hundred and eighty-seven and a half millions is the proportion damned !

“ As to the Jewish, Mahometan, and pagan populations, making eight hundred millions, it is by a large majority of christians denied that any are saved—but by the minority it is supposed, that salvation is possible to such of these classes as make a right improvement of the advantages which they possess. Let us then allow, a thirty-second part of these will get to heaven—a proportion equal to one half of those saved within christendom. A thirty-second part of eight hundred millions, is twenty-five millions ; and this is the ratio which get to heaven, of these classes, every twenty-five years : seven hundred and seventy-five millions are the ratio which sink to hell ! Now add together the numbers saved during each generation out of the entire human race—they amount to thirty-seven and a half millions ; and the aggregate of the numbers damned within the same time is nine hundred and sixty-two and a half millions !

“ Your world, Mr. Tub, taking the Mosaic history to be true, and following the popular chronology, has subsisted for six thousand years, which, divided by twenty-five, (the estimated length of a generation,) gives two hundred and forty as the number of generations of man since time began ; and (allowing the relative numbers of the redeemed and the lost to have been from the first what they now are) then, my dear Triptolemus, since time begun, the portals of hell have opened to two hundred and forty times nine hundred and sixty-two and a half millions of human souls !”

“ Mr. Paddle, you astound me !” exclaimed elder Tub.

“ Pardon me,” exclaimed the goblin, “ I am not done yet. I have, in my computation, been far more liberal on the side of salvation than facts will warrant—I have allowed the same proportion

to have gone to heaven before the introduction of christianity, as since—whereas the whole antediluvian world that were drowned by the flood, went to hell *en masse* ! The gates of perdition swung open, on that occasion, to their utmost width, and as the bard Milton has sung, ‘grated harsh thunder.’ Moreover, all the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah were damned, as were also the populations of Babylon, Idumea, Tyre, Sidon, Capernaum—the first born of Egypt which perished in the last plague—the hundred and eighty thousand of Senacherib’s army which the angel of the Lord destroyed in one night—the million and a half of Jews slain during the siege of Jerusalem, etc., etc. In full ten thousand instances, in the progress of time, have numerous masses of undying spirits thus sunk down to the realm of the damned—but the world of bliss meanwhile has received no such accessions ! In addition, we must take into the account, that full twelve centuries of almost utter moral darkness intervened between the primitive ages of the church and the time of the reformation ; and during all this season the successive generations of mankind were consigned, with but here and there an exception, to everlasting woe ! He, he ! I have oft been told in hell, (by old inhabitants of the place,) of the ecstacies occasioned there from time to time by these numerous arrivals—these are the festival seasons of the world below. He, he, he ! they are regarded as most signal triumphs over the plans and efforts of heaven. Our sovereign prince, Beelzebub, issues his mandate for a special illumination in hell on these occasions, for we have the material for illumination in great plenty, you are aware, and all at the cost of our Omnipotent foe. He, he, he, he ! Our prince has hopes of an entire and total victory eventually !”——

“You overwhelm me, Mr. Paddle!!!” again interrupted the elder——

“Patience, my good Triptolemus,” resumed the goblin, “your conceptions are not yet extended to the hundred millionth part of hell’s capacity ; we have been confining our attention to the accessions to its population from this earth alone ; but we are to remember that there was a numerous lapse *from heaven* before the earth was formed : it would astonish you, Mr. Tub, to be told of the vast numbers comprised in that revolt. Well, subsequent to this, in the four thousandth year of the world, (as you may read



in your sacred oracles, Revelation xii.—your bible is more read in hell than on earth,) there was another commotion in heaven, which resulted in the casting out from thence one third part of the stars, or angels! Now allowing an equal proportion to have been ejected in the first revolt, heaven, you perceive, must contain but a small moiety of its original inhabitants!—and such being the case with regard to that place, which is the immediate seat of Jehovah's throne, how many myriads upon myriads of immortal intelligences, think you, have fallen from the unnumbered spheres which revolve in the immensity of space?"——

"Hold! Mr. Paddle!" exclaimed the utterly bewildered Mr. Tub; "I sink beneath the conception! The sun itself, which in all probability is an inhabited sphere, is a million times larger than our earth, and all the stars are held to be suns of equal magnitude, and the centre to separate systems of worlds! It does, indeed, seem probable also, that these are all peopled with intelligent beings, equally responsible, and liable to incur a doom of endless ruin as ourselves! Gracious God! What must indeed be the capacity of that fiery world of despair, which is the receptacle for these innumerable lapsed spirits!"

"What *must* it be, sure enough? Why I've already told you, Mr. Tub, he, he, he!" rejoined the grinning fiend, "that your earth is a mere hazelnut in comparison to it. Have you never read the description of it in your oracles? 'For Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared: he hath made it deep and large; the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it.' Why the capacity of hell is such, that the Syracusan mathematician, Archimedes, has been employed in an active survey of it ever since his arrival there; and I heard him say, a little time since, that as many more thousands of years must elapse ere his survey is completed—for, unlike the earth, and the other planetary bodies, hell cannot be measured by astronomical observations. The Almighty architect of the world of suffering knew full well, from the first, for how many myriads of his offspring he was preparing this burning abode, and he extended its domain accordingly.

"Blind Homer has described Thebes as containing a hundred gates. Hell has more than a hundred thousand. You will readily believe this, Mr. Tub, when you reflect on the number and the fre-

quency of the arrivals to it from earth alone. Let me see—it is computed that the generations of man die, at the rate of one to every second of time!—sixty every minute!—three thousand six hundred every hour!—eighty-six thousand four hundred every twenty-four hours! Conceive, my dear Triptolemus, with what velocity the gates of woe must swing upon their hinges, to give admission to spirits at this rapid rate! If hell had but one portal, the arrivals to it from this earth alone would keep it opening and shutting with the speed of light!

“I am much amused betimes by the sage computations of some of your modern theologians, who, finding the wholesome and venerable dogma of endless damnation to be getting out of fashion among men, employ their ingenuity in so softening it, as to bring it within the pale of benevolence. He, he, he! They try to make out that the number of the lost, as compared with that of the saved of mankind, will be but as the proportion of penitentiary convicts to the bulk of society! He, he! They come, by a marvellously curious process of enumeration, to this result. ‘First (say they) all who die in infancy, are saved; then, all the heathen who improve their natural advantages aright; then again, there is to come a Millennium, a thousand years’ reign on the earth, during which, all are to be righteous’—and this thousand years *may* mean—he, he, he!—mark, it *may* mean, three hundred and sixty-five thousand times the term which is said! And so, by this hocus pocus process of computation, it is made out, that the number of the saved will greatly exceed that of the lost! He, he! how stupidly blind you mortals are when you have a party purpose to effect! Why! though a goblin of the pit, I can quote you scripture to better purpose. Now hear the following, and judge whether all mankind are to be righteous during the Millennium. ‘And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle; the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.’

“You see, then, my dear Triptolemus, that even at that boasted era of Messiah’s reign, a multitude, equalling in number the sands

of the sea, are to be added to the population of hell. He, he, he, he! This will be another jubilee for us. Why, the elect in your younger days, Mr. Tub, would have scouted as an impious heresy the idea, that more will be saved than damned: it was the essence of their comfort to believe, that heaven is a snug little walled city, with jasper gates, and streets of gold, where they should have nothing to do, to all eternity, but to sit on great benches and sing psalms; and the company of the place was to be a number 'so fixed and definite as to be incapable of increase or diminution.' Great comfort took they, as you, Mr. Tub, may remember, in singing that metrical paraphrase of the text about the broad and narrow way:

'Broad is the road that leads to death,  
And thousands flock together there;  
But wisdom shows a narrow path,  
With here and there a traveler.'

It was one saved, to a thousand damned, in those good old times; but now—he, he, he!—the orthodoxy of your day is heels uppermost, Mr. Tub! In times not long past it was thought, that not a Jew, nor a Mahometan, nor a pagan, nor an infant, (except of elect parents, nor then, except baptized,) nor a unitarian, nor socinian, nor methodist, nor papist, would get to heaven! But of late—he, he, he!—either heaven has grown larger, or the gate-keeper has become remiss in examining the passports; for by a late census of the place, these wise-heads have discovered, that its inhabitants outnumber those of hell, by as much as the honest part of the earth's community outnumber the criminal portion in the penitentiaries!!! He, he, he, he!"

How long the impious goblin, Paddle, would have continued his profane cachinnations, had no interruption occurred, I take it not on me to say; but Dorothy Tub, finding no ease to her corns and *rheumatiz* while alone in her cold bed, (it's a pity she had'nt thought of a warming pan!) came down to try the virtues of the fire and some *yarb* tea. To the utter astopishment of the elder, her chair was vacant, and in the precise situation in which she had left it about an hour before! Mr. Paddle had made his exit—whether up the chimney, or, like a fairy queen of old, through the keyhole—or whether he had dissolved himself into mist, as upon a former occasion, (for the elder did fancy that the atmosphere of

the room was somewhat hazy,) is more than can be ascertained. However, it was deemed most prudent to keep the matter *whish!* from Mrs. Tub, rather than to add the *hysterics* to her chapter of *ailments*. And, besides, the elder was not clear in his own mind (as before) whether the whole were not a freak of the fancy. So, having ministered to Dorothy the assistance, which every ailing spouse has a right to expect from her helpmate, he betook himself to his couch.

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#### CHAPTER IV.

“He, he, he! my old friend Tub—good evening to you!” Thus unceremoniously was the good elder accosted as he rode toward home one misty night, by that audacious goblin, Paddle, whom he suddenly found by his side, mounted on a horse which kept even pace with his own. “Let me see,” continued the fiend, “I told you, in our former interviews, of the immense magnitude of the world below, and of the respectability of its society—on which important topics mortals are inclined to bestow but little reflection: there are also other matters pertaining to the place and its inhabitants, concerning which their notions are very crude and contradictory. They are apt to represent our prince, Beelzebub, as having a *cloven foot*, which it is not in his power to conceal! He, he, he! But Dutch christians, with better sense, generally agree in assigning him a *horse’s hoof*! I say, with better sense, for they thus very properly place him amongst *unclean beasts*—whereas, with a parted hoof, he is an *eatable animal*, according to the Mosaic code—he, he!

“They represent, too, that the devil is chained down, and confined in the burning lake; and yet, at the same time, that he is perpetrating all sorts of mischief all over the world! Your divine versifier, Watts, in describing hell, thus alludes to him:

‘There Satan, the first sinner, lies,  
And roars, and bites his iron bands;  
In vain the rebel strives to rise,  
Crush’d with the weight of both thy hands.’

From which, it would seem, that he is kept down under the fire, by an express exertion of Omnipotence. Nevertheless, he is at

the same time perfectly at large, 'going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it!' He is in Europe, and Asia, and Africa, and America, and Australasia, and in the islands of the South sea—assuming all sorts of forms and colors, and tempting a thousand different persons to a thousand different modes of sinning! He, he, he! A most puissant devil is our mighty prince Beelzebub! It is gravely put forth by your notorious commentator, Clarke, that it was probably he who raised the tempest about the vessel in which Christ and his disciples were sailing, with the view of drowning them all together, and so quashing the gospel scheme in its beginning! A most shrewd design, it must be owned; but surely, our prince could not have so far taken leave of his wits as to hope anything from a tempest which he knew Messiah had power to calm! He, he! The devil may properly enough be taken for a knave all over the world; but nobody mistrusts him for a fool! No, no, not a fool, for he has outwitted Omniscience! he has foiled all the plans and purposes of heaven! When he had seduced from their purity the first human pair, he was told by Jehovah that his head should be bruised. He, he! So far from it, he has been receiving constant accessions to the number of his subjects ever since; and over these he is to have dominion to eternity! He would have gained infinitely less, had Jehovah damned the first couple, instead of permitting them to live, and propagate unnumbered millions of their race for hell! It was poor economy in God to sacrifice his Son for the world's redemption, when he knew that the devil would contrive to profit by the scheme much more largely than himself!

"And pray, my good friend Tub, why enters it not into the sapient heads of you mortals, that, as Satan found it so easy to journey from hell to your world, other peopled spheres may be equally accessible to him? The station of your earth is scarcely midway between the sun and the Georgium Sidus, and is therefore no nearer a neighbor to hell than is other planets in the system. Now the truth is, that our prince is a free and privileged commoner of creation, and he is anything but slack in improving his opportunities to the advancement of his own empire; hence he is to be found every where, and at the season most opportune for his interests: no place, nor presence, is sacred from his intrusions—he, he! he goes most regularly to church, with

God's people, as you may read in the book of Job, and even into the pulpit goeth he, in company with the preacher. When Whitfield was informed, at the foot of the pulpit stairs, that he had delivered himself of a most admirable sermon, he replied, that the devil had so told him before; and there is undoubted matter of fact in the quaint couplet of the old divine, that

There's nowhere found a house of prayer,  
But Satan hath an altar there.'

"I heard him relate, not long since, to the great amusement of his infernal subjects, that he had that day stepped into a church just in time to prevent the conversion of a score of souls! It was a time of *excitement* in the church—a score of persons had occupied *the mourner's seats*—some half a dozen preachers were present, besides about twice the number of subaltern ecclesiastics, who glided, like ghosts in kid slippers, up and down the aisles, peering about for such of the female auditors as were weeping or looking serious; the fears of the congregation had been wrought upon to the utmost, a death-like silence prevailed, only occasionally broken by the loud and hollow whispers of the ecclesiastics, 'God—is here'!—which sent a thrill through the whole house. At this interesting crisis, the devil (who had been also peering about for some work in *his* line) found a large dog quietly snoozing under one of the benches; he forthwith pinched his tail—the dog set up a howl, and those near fell to kicking and caning him out of the church: in his flight he unfortunately tript up a deacon, who sprawled his full length in the aisle. He, he, he!—there were many in the congregation whose risible muscles were not proof against all this, and an obstreperous laugh ensued! Thus was that farce brought to a conclusion."——

"Hold! hold, there, Mr. Paddle!" interrupted the elder. "I won't allow your tongue to run gallop at such a rate; for the salvation of the elect is not to be thwarted by such chances as you have related, since it has been fixed from eternity, in a compact between the persons of the adorable trinity—in a 'covenant, ordered in all things and sure;' and therefore"——

"Pooh! pooh!" abruptly rejoined the goblin. "I will not waste breath in arguing election and reprobation with you, Mr. Tub. I speak from actual knowledge when I say, that the merest accidents in the world have determined the final and

eternal fates of thousands ! There was Toby Tibbins, for example, an intimate acquaintance of mine and your father's, on earth ; he was convicted of being a tory spy, and sentenced to be hung. While in confinement, Toby became a penitent, confessed all his sins, and with the aid of our company's chaplain, he obtained the favor of God. Thus Toby got all his scriptural concerns into a right trim for heaven ; but, unfortunately for his soul, he was pardoned under the gallows : he relapsed into his former rogueries, and has been a companion with me in hell for the last ten years !

“There was also Obadiah Snubbs, the undoubted cause of whose damnation was, that his nose was set too far on one side of his face. I knew Mr. Snubbs well, and can certify that he was soundly converted some half-dozen times ; but that nose of his was a most serious stumbling-block to him—it involved him in constant broils, to the great detriment of his spiritual health. He at length found it necessary, for the safety of his soul, to remove into this western region, (then a wilderness,) where he supposed his nose would escape the observation and ridicule which it had attracted on the other side of the mountains ; so he squatted in a cabin near the mouth of Grave creek, where there were but four or five widely scattered settlers. In this retirement, he managed to keep his soul's affairs in a safe condition for some time ; but, unfortunately for him, having occasion to go to Fort Wheeling one day to buy stores, a fellow there took the liberty to remark upon the awry posture of his proboscis—which so enraged my friend Obadiah, that, (forgetting his conversion) he drew his knife on his tormentor, and was killed in the quarrel.—He, he ! Poor Snubbs would have now been in heaven but for his nose !

“Even I myself, Mr. Tub, he, he, he ! came very near slipping in amongst the elect at one time ! I should have made it out, I believe, had I not possessed an inordinate turn for whatever was comical ; and the devil finding this out, took care always to put funny thoughts into my head when I was saying my prayers—he, he !

“Another stumbling-block with me, when on earth, was, that our preachers, in their printed and pulpit descriptions, used so to confound God and the devil, that, for the life of me, I could scarcely tell which was which. Did you ever, Mr. Tub, read old Jona-

than Edwards ? If so, you will understand what I mean. Divines in those days used to tell how much it would be to the glory of God to burn the sinner—how much he would mock, and tantalize him, and laugh at his miseries; and how the saints themselves would unite with the deity in this cruel business ! I took up a volume of sermons one day, by Dr. Benson, (who published a commentary on the bible ;) among them was one from the text, ‘ If I make my bed in hell, thou art there.’ On which the Doctor assumed, that God is personally present in the world of suffering. And for what purpose, think you ? Why, saith the Doctor, that he may blow the flames thereof to their utmost intensity of heat, and thereby inflict a more poignant suffering on the unhappy spirits consigned thereto ! Nor is that all ; but God must be personally in hell, in order that he may quicken the insensibilities of the damned, and make them more susceptible to the influence of the flames ! As thus portrayed, I found it impossible to discriminate between God and the devil ; and, consequently, I found it impossible also to love the one more than the other. I know of millions who have stumbled into hell from the same cause ; for it is not in the nature of thinking beings to love an object that is represented to them in an odious and detestable light. I therefore loathed both God and the devil in about an equal degree ; but I have since learned to prefer the latter, since, though he lures men into sin, he can plead in excuse of his conduct, that it is from motives of opposition to their Maker rather than to them ; and moreover, (as he pleads) they are not the offspring of *his* power, for if they were, he could find means to take care of them, and would certainly not permit them to be infinitely ruined by a foe of inferior power to his own, and then seek to excuse himself with the weak pretence, that he could not help it. From considerations like these, Satan is regarded with more respect by his subjects than they can entertain toward the infinite Being who created them, weak and ignorant, and then exposed them to be entrapt, and ruined for eternity, by his wily enemy—and who, with all his professed love for them, and desire for their salvation, made their final and everlasting destiny to depend on their giving a blind faith to certain riddles respecting the trinity and the new birth.

“ Well, Mr. Tub,” continued the goblin, “ we have got to within a few yards of your gate, and this is the last visit I am



permitted to make you—it is only by the especial grace of our prince that I have been favored with a short furlough from hell these three times—so I shall just tell you for your comfort, that you will be one day favored with the sight of your poor old father, and the residue of the gallant fellows who slumber with him under that stone, and much the greater part of the brave soldiers of the revolution—hundreds of whom went to hell from the battle-grounds of Saratoga, Monmouth, Brandywine, Germantown, etc.—whose virtues you are at present man and patriot enough to admire.—But at the era to which I allude, you will be so much a dastard as to say *amen*—some of the old divines assert—to *laugh*, and *rejoice* at the sentence which shall seal them over to suffering and despair for eternity. I speak of the appointed day of judgment, when our cause is to have a re-hearing; for—he, he! we are committed to hell for the present only on suspicion! As one of the elect, Mr. Tub, it will be your bounden duty to sanction all the divine doings—even those which shall consign your parents, possibly also your children, and hundreds of thousands of millions of your fellow-beings, amongst whom will be many whose virtues, or splendid deeds, have recommended them to your admiration, and that of all succeeding generations, to a doom of ceaseless woe and unmitigated despair. Do you recoil at the thought, Mr. Tub? You have reason to suspect that you are not a genuine subject of grace if you do. You must not allow your carnal feelings of sorrow, or pity, to be exercised about these matters; for when you get to heaven you will be so far conformed to the divine dispositions, that you can see those whom you loved and venerated on earth, boiling and writhing in hell with great complacency.—But be careful, my dear fellow, that you ‘give all diligence to make your calling and election sure;’ for in the judgement alluded to, it may possibly be found, that some shall have been falsely committed to hell, and others, without due examination, admitted to heaven. He, he! it would be considerably to the comfort of Shadrach Paddle, if it should turn out that such a mistake has occurred in his case! for although, as I have said, there is much delectable society in hell, I fear I shall never become quite reconciled to its climate. I would also forewarn you, my friend Tub, for I feel an interest in you for my old friend Epaphroditus’ sake, (and that the damned do feel an interest in behalf of

the dwellers on earth, you may learn from the story in your sacred oracles about the rich man and Lazarus,) I would warn you, I say, against losing your foot-hold in heaven when once you get there; for since, as the old hymn hath it,

‘From heaven the sinning angels fell,’

it may also chance that some sinning saints will be falling from thence some time or other; and beware, my dear Triptolemus, that you are not overtaken with such mishap, for the change of climate in such case (from heaven to hell) would be greatly to the detriment of your comfort and constitution. So here we are at your gate—I hope you have found me very pleasant and instructive society, Mr. Tub—so good bye to you, my old buck, and take good care of yourself”—— The next moment Shadrach Paddle—horse and all—had vanished!!!

“Did you see him, Cato?” inquired the elder of one of his negroes, who had come to open the gate for him.

“Seed who, massa?” was Cato’s returning inquiry.

“Why, the person who rode up in company with me,” replied Mr. Tub.

Cato shewed his ivories from ear to ear as he exclaimed, “Lorra mercy, massa! I didn’t saw nobody at all! Golly! him mus a bin yar shadder!”

“Well, never mind, Cato,” returned the elder. “Say nothing about it, but just put away the beast.”

But the matter was fated not to be thus hushed up; for, unfortunately for the peace of our friend Triptolemus, it happened that his spouse Dorothy had been looking out at the door, on his arrival, and had overheard his inquiries of Cato. So she plied him with question upon question, and had recourse to all those arts of tantalization which the gentle sex know so well how to practice upon the lords of creation, until the poor elder was glad enough to make a clean breast in order to escape her din. Instead of helping the matter, however, this only made it worse; for Dorothy threatened him with hysterics and fainting-fits to the end of her days, unless the matter were instantly submitted to the consideration of their minister—who was sent for forthwith, and detained until the whole affair had been rehearsed and canvassed in all its forms; which occupied the worthy trio until the first cock-crowing.

“I should not hesitate, elder,” said the Rev. Mr. Smuggleton, at parting, “to resolve this matter into a bona fide apparition from the infernal pit, were it not for the horse, on which you represent Mr. Paddle to have been mounted during the last interview; this circumstance convinces me that it was but an optical illusion, for dead horses have no ghosts to represent them, and had it been a living horse your negro would have seen it when it came up to the gate. I must therefore decide, Mr. Tub, that it was all, from first to last, an illusion of the senses; in which case I fear that your carnal judgement must have suggested the profane and impious matters which you suppose the damned spirit to have communicated. This affair must be brought before the church, Mr. Tub, for the spirit of heresy is getting to be too rife among us to be gently dealt with—and besides, elder Tub, you have been far less liberal of your carnal means in the cause of God than your circumstances would warrant. You are but God’s steward, Mr. Tub, in regard to what you possess; and when you withhold the means which God requires for carrying on his purposes of grace in the world, he holds you guilty of a robbery of himself. Remember these things, elder Tub, for the church has too long forborne to cut off its dry and unprofitable branches. Good night, Mr. Tub.”

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## CONCLUSION.

The livelong night did our friend Triptolemus, and his spouse Dorothy, lay awake in conversation on the matters related in the preceding narrative. The elder confessed, as a matter of privacy, to his loving rib, (in whose custody the secret was undoubtedly safe,) that he *had* been leaning toward heresy somewhat strongly of late; and that in all probability the Rev. Mr. Smuggleton was right in his explanation of the supposed interviews with the goblin. “But then, my dear Dorothy,” continued the elder, “we must take counsel of prudence in our management of this business. Since the late protracted meeting, the church has much increased in numbers, and is less disposed to be forbearant than when it was small in members and means. I have lately

turned my store and tavern into temperance establishments, and have the promise of all their custom, on the condition that I give a tenth of the profits to the Lord ; which I have willingly agreed to do, as I can make out the tithe by extra charges. They have consented, however, that I shall sell out the stock of whiskey now on hand, and as the quantity is pretty large, it may (by a prudent process of watering) be made to hold out until the temperance mania shall subside. All things considered, therefore, it will be much to our carnal interests that I make all the concessions required by the church in regard to this ghost business ; it would not do to be turned out in the present posture of affairs !”

“Certainly not, Mr. Tub, certainly not !” replied the equally pliant Dorothy. “Our Keziah is now president of the FEMALE TRACT SOCIETY ; and Mr. Smuggleton speaks so highly of her gift in prayer, that I am pretty sure there will be a match between them, which would be a good bargain for Keziah, who is getting well toward thirty ; but if you were turned out of church, Mr. Tub, it might very seriously interrupt that speculation.”

In short, the result of the conference between this loving and pliant couple was, that the elder should make his submission in due form—lament over his spiritual barrenness and short comings—and lay the blame of all that had transpired to the devil. All which was accordingly done ; and I have the great pleasure to inform you, reader, that in all these worldly-wise calculations, our friend Triptolemus sped to admiration ; he now goes the whole animal in orthodoxy for fear of being suspected of a leaning to the other side—so that he retains his former standing, and dignity, and run of church custom, and reputation for soundness in faith. Moreover, Keziah Tub that was, is now Mrs. Smuggleton ; and as to the impudent goblin, Paddle, he has never since been seen in those parts, either on foot or horseback, and devoutly is it to be hoped that he never will. So here end the

REVELATIONS.

## APPENDIX

TO

### REVELATIONS FROM HELL.

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The foregoing narrative, gentle reader, is in a lighter and more ludicrous strain than it suits my general taste to write, or yours, it may be, to peruse; if you have supposed my design therein to have been mere amusement, at the expense of opinions and usages held sacred by many, you have greatly misconceived it. An author, as well as a public speaker, finds that different modes of address must be resorted to, in order to gain access to different minds. Some may be reached by closely reasoned argumentation—some would prefer to have the argument diluted with some florid and gratuitous declamation—some require to be stung into reflection with sarcasm—and some with playful satire. In this case, my design has been to bring before the mind some facts connected with the notion of endless misery, which are not generally taken into the account when that topic is under consideration; but which, on account of their magnitude, are worthy of a place in the serious thoughts of all; and if the undeniable results of a doctrine are to have any bearing on the decision as to its truth or falsity, ought to seal the fate of the merciless dogma of endless woe, effectually and forever.

The suggestions respecting the magnitude of hell, and the kind of inhabitants which (among others) it must contain, are all, as I conceive, fully within the range of probability, and might have been carried even considerably farther; the intelligent reader, on reflection, cannot but entirely concur in this. The Rev. Dr. Wilson, of Albany, apparently a very conscientious presbyterian clergyman, published a sermon a few years since, in which he asserts that the majority of the framers of our federal constitution were deists or atheists. The great and good Washington, himself, he supposes to have held the Christian religion in light esteem; the faith of Jefferson, Madison, Monroe and Franklin, he considers to have been more than doubtful; and that of the Adamses (being Unitarianism) is, in his judgment, but little better; nor is Dr. Wilson alone, by a great deal, in these suppositions. I presume that very, *very* few orthodox ministers can be found who would deliberately affirm, that they believe these distinguished personages to have possessed that pure faith, and to have undergone that divine experience, which are held to be indispensable to salvation; and if they did not, then, on the popular hypothesis of endless misery, they are all damned!

As to the distinguished personages of antiquity, I have allowed the goblin to allot a place in hell to only such of them, as, from their histories, are undoubtedly there, on the endless misery hypothesis. Marcus Brutus, with all his virtues (and by universal testimony these were

many and eminent) terminated his life by suicide—which was a common case in those days. The virtuous Roman matron, who did the same to prevent violation, and thereby occasioned the first overthrow of monarchical power of which history furnishes the record, must be consigned to a common hell with the infamous Cleopatra! It were vain to enlarge, however, for the scope for this kind of reflections is boundless. I here but just touch on these facts, that the reader may see, that our veritable friend Paddle's speculations about hell and its inhabitants, are not absolutely gratuitous; in fact, they were entirely designed as an indirect mode of argumentation, and couched in their present form the better to secure a reading and awaken reflection.

It is hoped that the serious and moderate portion of my orthodox readers, will not accuse me of an attempt to ridicule *their* professions or practice in the person of elder Tub. It is known that hypocrites and double-minded persons are to be found amongst all religious classes—Christian, Jew, Mahomedan, and Pagan; against pretenders of this class only are the shafts of my ridicule directed. The sincere Christian has my respect and my affection, wherever, or of what denomination soever, he is found.

“To those I render more than mere respect,  
Whose actions say that they respect themselves.”

But the hypocrite has my detestation and contempt, whether he be orthodox or heterodox; for neither the one nor the other is free from his intrusions, according as he judges that with the one or the other his selfish ends may be best promoted.

The reader may be curious to know whether there is actually such a spot on the Virginia shore of the Ohio as that described in the preceding narrative. To this I can only answer, that I was informed some years ago that there is (or used to be, I have forgotten which,) a stone on that shore, the precise *locale* of which I did not learn, which bears an inscription to the purport of the one I have described. This is all I know about it; the rest is fancy.

## THE GOSPEL CONSUMMATION.

It comes ! it comes ! we now behold  
The dawn of times by seers foretold,  
    The glorious gospel day ;  
Soon, soon its noon-tide blaze we'll see,  
When death, and sin, and tears shall flee,  
    And darkness melt away.

Then God the cov'ring shall remove,  
The veil that now conceals his love,  
    And all shall see his face ;  
All kindreds, tribes, and tongues shall own  
Salvation is from God alone,  
    The gift of sov'reign grace.

Apostles, prophets, there we'll see,  
A glorious white-robed company,  
    Their toils and suff'rings o'er ;  
They try to tell the depth and height  
And length of goodness infinite,  
    And all its breadth explore.

Hark ! hark ! we hear the rapt'rous song  
Of the redeem'd—a countless throng ;  
    “ Worthy the Lamb ! ” they sing,  
“ Who died our ruined race to save ;  
Where is thy boasted vict'ry, grave ?  
    O death ! where is thy sting ? ”

The Lord will then his table spread,  
And all mankind, with Christ their head,  
    Shall to that feast sit down ;  
The ocean of his pard'ning grace  
Shall all their sins and griefs efface,  
    And their remembrance drown.

Oh ! blissful time ! oh ! glorious day !  
When all beneath love's boundless sway  
    O'erwhelm'd with bliss shall fall ;  
Shall with united souls accord,  
That Christ in God is sov'reign Lord,  
    And God is all in all.





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